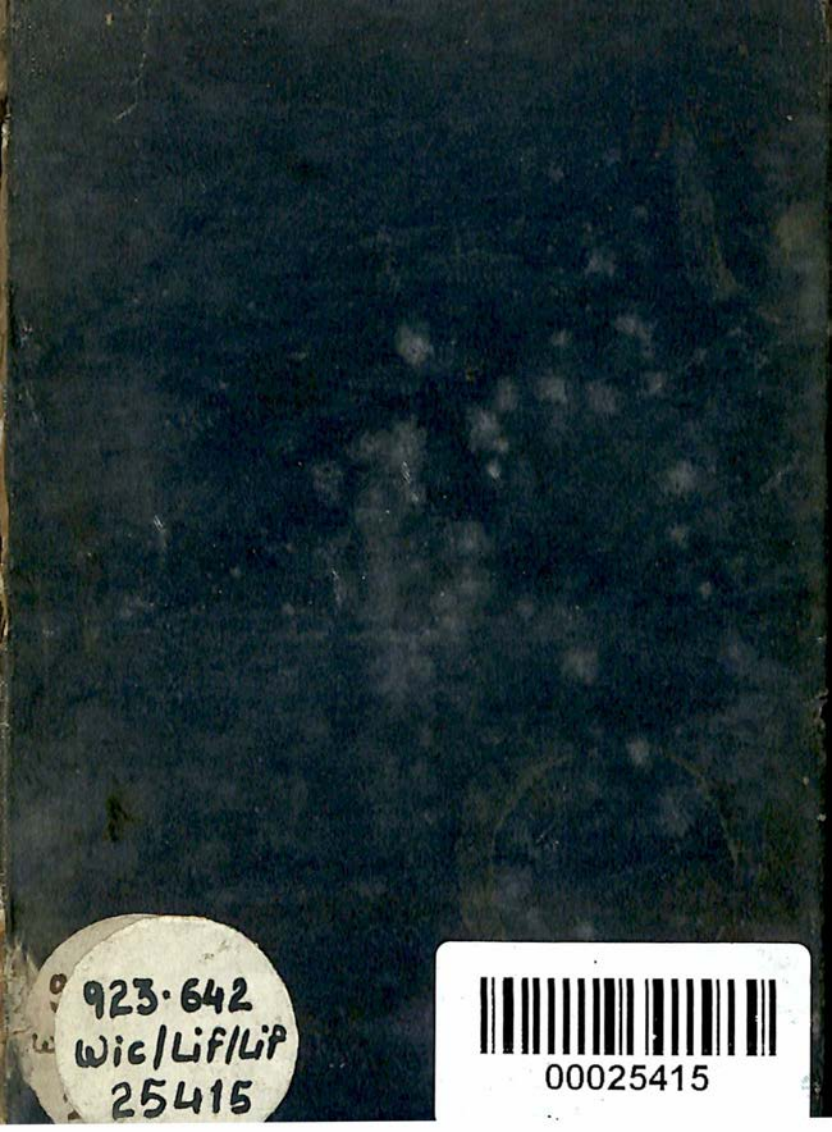
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THE

LIFE

OF

JOHN WICKLIFF.

WITH AN

APPENDIX

AND

LIST OF HIS WORKS.

25415

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PREFACE.

I DOUBT not that all who are interested in the history of the first struggles of the human mind to free itself from the intolerable chains of Catholic superstition, will give me a favourable perusal to this Life of Wickliff, "that Englishman," to use the words of Milton in his Tetrachordon, "honoured of God to be the first Preacher of a general Reformation to all Europe."

Dr John Lewis, in 1780, published a Life of Wickliff, a work especially valuable to the scholar for its numerous quotations from the manuscript writings of the Reformer, which are preserved in

some of the great public libraries of England, but yet so exceeding dry and uninviting in its style and arrangement, that few general readers would consent to labour through its learned pages.

Another English divine, also a man of much learning and accurate research, Dr James, Keeper of the Bodleian, published, in the year 1608, an excellent work, entitled, "Wickliff's Conformity with the now Church of England," in which the opinions of Wickliff, upon all the essential articles of Christian belief, are diligently extracted from his manuscript writings, and compared with the doctrines held by the Church of England. But Dr James's book has now become so extremely rare, that few perhaps, even of the most enthusiastic bibliomaniacs, have had an opportunity of examining it. In addition to these, a short Life of the Reformer has been written by Gilpin; but it is a very su-

perficial performance, nor do I know any other biographical account of him, with the exception of that which is included in the Old Biographia Brittanica, an unequally written work, but full, in many places, of rich and excellent materials.

A Life of Wickliff, therefore, which might be attractive to the general reader, and not uninstructive to the scholar and antiquarian, which might occupy a middle place between the solid learning of Dr Lewis and the light labours of Gilpin, appeared still a desideratum; and this, in the following work, I have endeavoured to supply.

THE

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"Had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our Prelates, against the divine and admirable spirit of Wickliff, to suppress him as a schismatic or innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Hússe, and Jerome, no nor the name of Luther, or of Calvin had ever been known."

Milton, in his Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing.

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OF

JOHN WICKLIFF.

JOHN WICKLIFF, the father of the Reformation, is perhaps more justly entitled to the epithet of a great man, than most others who have had that epithet bestowed on them. In the midst of the deepest intellectual slavery, under which the human mind had groaned for more than a thousand years, he was the first who successfully struggled to be free, and who exerted a noble liberty of thought, when comfort, and station, and life itself, were likely to be sacrificed in the adventure. He was greater in one respect, than his future follower Luther, because the darkness of ignorance which overspread the world in the time of

Wickliff, was deeper and more hopeless than when the German reformer began his high career, because Luther was cheered and assisted by the light and force of reviving letters, while Wickliff, on the contrary, had to work alone, and surrounded by the profoundest scholastic gloom.

Any one who has at all travelled through England, must know the beautiful little town of Richmond in Yorkshire, near which there is a small village called Spreswell, of poor appearance, but surrounded by fair woods and fertile fields. In this village, according to that excellent and learned antiquary John Leland,* whose books are a storehouse of curious matters, John Wickliff was born; so at least, in Leland's days, said the current tradition of the neighbourhood. The time of his birth was about 1325, two years before the deposition of that imbecile monarch Edward the Second, and the accession of his victorious and famous son Edward the Third, the conqueror of France, and the father of Edward the Black Prince. Where John Wickliff was educated in his boyish years, is not now known. At this time the

* Itinerary, vol. V. p. 99.

only schools in England were to be found in the monasteries, and in one of these, in or near to Richmond, we may be certain that the boy was initiated in the rudiments of learning, then termed his grammaticals—but alas, when the name of the pædagogue of many a vain poetaster, and shallow pretender to letters, has been carefully preserved, the name of John Wickliff's master has passed into oblivion.

Wherever he was educated, he soon showed signs of an early and pregnant wit, and was sent at a ripe age to the University of Oxford, where he was first admitted a Commoner of Queen's College. This house of learning, not many years before, had been founded by the chaplain of Philippa of Hainault, Edward the Third's Queen, whose name was Robert de Eglesfield,* an enthusiastic lover of good letters. In this age most things took a religious shape, and this College, as constituted by the founder, supported a Provost and twelve Fellows, together with seventy poor scholars, in imitation of our Saviour, his twelve apostles and seventy dis-

* Ant. Wood.—Hist. of the Colleges and Halls in Oxford, p. 138, 139, Edition by Gutch.—The date of the foundation is 18th January 1340.

ciples. Yet in number only, and in no other respect, did these Fellows imitate the primitive apostles, for they sat at dinner in robes of scarlet; and at the sound of a trumpet, the seventy poor scholars came trooping into the refectory, and knelt reverently at the board, ready to pick up the crumbs either of doctrine or of carnal comfort which fell from their lips. This was the College in which Wickliff first studied; and it was here also that our heroic King, Henry the Fifth, when a youth, received his rudiments of learning, under the care of Cardinal Beaufort, his uncle.* In this College of Queens, however, Wickliff did not long remain, but removed to Merton, which, as it was the seminary of greatest antiquity in Oxford, so was it then more richly furnished than them all, in learned clerks, and cunning masters, of what in these days were termed the seven liberal sciences. And here

* In these days, the Prince's dear friend and crony was one Thomas Rodbourn, a learned and pleasant man, much given to mathematics, who afterwards became private chaplain to that great King, and accompanied him in his expedition to France in 1417.—*Tanner Biblioth. voce Rudburn. Ant. Wood. Hist. of Colleges and Halls*, p. 6.

† These seven liberal arts were often called Trivials and Quadrivials. By the Trivia were meant, grammar, logic, and

he soon showed that astonishing capacity which God had given him above his fellows; so that he became a great adept in the trifling and vain learning of those times, and beat at their own weapons all the doctors—profound, singular, venerable, seraphic, and the like; for with such titles these self-conceited dogmatists ennobled each other. But in the midst of these studies and triumphs, and when the books of Aristotle, in a barbarian Latin dress,* being all that these days of meagre letters possessed, and the volumes of the civil and canon law, were diligently handled by him, it happened, by a singular providence, that he took to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and soon became so entirely buried and engrossed therein, that his fellow-collegians gave him the surname

rhetoric. By the Quadrivia, arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy.—See *Junii Etymol. voce Trivial.* PEGGE'S *Grosteste's Life*, p. 69.

* "He saw plainly," says Pegge, in his *Life of Grosteste*, p. 11, "that the Aristotle whom they read, commented on, and adored, was a Greek author, whose original text not a single man amongst them was capable of perusing; but all were obliged to content themselves with Latin translations, and such as were commonly made from the Arabic versions of the Moors of Spain."—See CAVE, *Hist. Liter.* p. 615.

of the Evangelical or Gospel Doctor. In this study, few even of the churchmen, to their disgrace be it spoken, intermeddled with him. To mouth over their unmeaning homilies, to dance attendance with their copes, palls, pastoral staffs, censers, and other pieces of prelatic pomp, before some image of the Virgin, they were all very ready, and as ready to carouse in the refectory, and to carry on their Bacchanalian intrigues in some private cloister or dormitory; but as far as a studious and holy life was concerned, their knowledge and practice was a miserable blank. And the Holy Scriptures were, to many of these false shepherds, as much a dead letter, as Mahomet's Koran to the Christians of this day.

Indeed it is not easy to describe, how sadly all things had in these times degenerated, from the original simplicity of Christianity, as taught by its divine founder, and from the wholesome regimen of the primitive church.* Not to mention the dreadful guilt, and the horrid succession of crimes which were entailed upon the hu-

* "The people were taught to worship no other thing but that which they did see, and did see almost nothing which they did not worship." Fox's *Acts and Monuments*, p. 424.

man race, by that succession of evil spirits in human shapes, who for many dark ages sat in the chair of St Peter, as they profanely term the Roman throne, I may briefly observe, that the whole of England was clustered over with monasteries, abbacies, priories, monastic conventicles, and religious cells of all descriptions and sizes; and that these were in too many cases the whited sepulchres described in Scripture, most beautiful and pure without—but within, the receptacles of spiritual death, full of all lewdness, cruelty, hypocrisy, and fraud.

The learning too of these times was neither solid nor good, but most vain and frivolous. Few scholars were anywhere to be found, and those who did aspire to this name, under the title of irrefragable doctors were often little else than full-blown vapouring pedants, who consumed their years, and tortured their unhappy brains, with endless discussions upon accidents, instances, quantities, qualities, quiddities, and prædicaments, till they arrived at a pitch of extreme ignorance and pride, and the language which they wrote, and the sciences which they pretended to teach, became nothing more than a repetition of barbarous sounds. Yet to this de-

generate character of the generality of monkish scholars, there were some exceptions, and amid the darkness a few original thinkers appeared. To these Wickliff turned his eyes, and from their pages he extracted the sweet of the truth, and left the folly and bitterness behind. In this manner he became not so much a follower, as an improver upon the schoolmen, and in the pages of Occham, Bradwardine, Armachanus, Guido de Sancto Amore, Marsilius, Abelard, and that singularly learned man Robert Grosted, bishop of Lincoln, he had discernment to see the truth, which he afterwards did boldly maintain and pursue. By Occham and Marsilius he was informed of the Pope's intrusions and usurpations upon kings; of Guido and Armachanus he learned the sundry abuses of monks and friars, in upholding this usurped power; from Abelard he extracted the right faith in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; in the pages of Bradwardine he perceived the nature of a guilty soul's justification by faith, contrary to the opinions of Pelagians and Papists; and lastly, in the pages of Bishop Grosted, in which, next to the Bible, he took most delight, he descried the

Pope to be open Antichrist, by denying to men the liberty of preaching the gospel, and placing ignorant pastors in the church of God.* For in those days most monks and ministers never read at all, and the monasteries which, during the first ages of the church, had been the retreats of learning and the muses, were filled with whole herds of luxurious drones, devoted servants of their appetites, who frequented the cellar more than the library of the convent, and dearly loved the flesh pots of Egypt, but cared little for the wisdom of the Egyptians.

Bred up under such a deplorable aspect of learning, it was nothing less than the watchful kindness of God which saved Wickliff from the vice and folly which everywhere, even in the bosom of his Alma Mater, surrounded him, and sent him to the study of his Bible. The same memory, which had gotten by heart many a useless page of Aristotle, was now more profitably occupied, in storing its secret chambers with better furniture from the book of life, and instead of plucking bitter fruit from the tree of

* Life of Wickliff, at the end of James's very rare work, entitled, "Wickliff's Conformitie with the Now Church of England."

scholastic theology, he wandered into the land of promise, and there culled the fresh and unwithering flowers of perfect wisdom and eternal truth. In these studies he consumed the night watches, and prevented the dawn of the morning. At his meals, at his recreations, at his walks in the summer season, the Bible was his constant companion, and often was he to be seen sitting in some of the shady avenues of Merton College, in the simple black gown, which was well fitted to show to advantage his tall figure, and with that majestic countenance which God had given him, as an index of the truth, intently fixed upon the book of life, reading with single-heartedness its golden pages, and trembling over its awful denunciations, till the vesper bells of his College called him to his devotions.—How simple a picture, and how different from that of the proud and vainglorious doctor of scholastic divinity, marching to his pulpit or cathedra in his scarlet robe, with a golden chain round his neck, one obsequious disciple holding up his train, and another groaning under the weight of the volume of Scotus or Lombardus, on which his Seraphic Excellency intends to deliver his pre-

lections—But to come back to Wickliff: his life passed tranquilly in these divine studies, till he was called from his learned retirement by what he esteemed the abuses of the begging friars, a set of religious men, who began about this time to propagate many new and unheard-of doctrines, regarding the poverty of Christ, and to seduce the youth of the country, from the University into the convents. Against these priests Wickliff first drew the sword of controversy,* and exposed himself, for the truth's sake, to the fury of the Pope and his minions. And yet we must not direct against these religious orders of Cœnobites too sweeping a censure, for, owing to the disputes between them and the doctors of the university, (and here I speak of their first or golden time,) truth was sometimes elicited, and a freedom of thought and of debate encouraged; the only true soil out of which truth can grow. These orders of friars mendicant had now for many years so generally branched over Europe, that scarce a region was to be found, where they had not in great numbers established themselves.

* Leland de Script. Britt., vol. II. p. 379. Before his attack on the begging friars, Wickliff published, in 1356, a short tract entitled, "Of the Last Age of the Church." Lewis, p. 3.

It is well known that in the church of Rome the orders of regular priests, by which we mean those deluded and unfortunate persons who have taken vows of perpetual celibacy and poverty, were divided into two classes, monks and friars. The monks soon became lazy and corrupted; for although this great and overwhelming sect, which has shaken thrones and given laws to kings, preserved the letter of their vow of poverty by renouncing individual gains, yet they consented to receive from the donations of the pious, gold and silver, and lands and houses, all of which were thrown into the common property of the convent, so that they soon began to be possessed of immense revenues; and when one met the gorgeous Archbishop travelling in his painted litter, drawn by mules with their gilded trappings and silver bells sounding on the road, or the mitred Abbot on his sleek palfrey, with his hawk on his wrist, and his well-fed lacqueys at his heels, it was difficult not to contrast their pretended profession of poverty with the real luxury in which they lived.* Very

* Before Robert was consecrated, a certain monk presented a deacon to him for institution to a large cure. The party had not the tonsure, and, contrary to Canon, was dressed in

different from this was the poor friar, and yet, for all his self-denial, neither less proud or powerful. A coarse gown of black serge cast about him, confined by a rope drawn round his waist, his head uncovered, except when the storm came on, and then only sheltered by his cowl, his feet and neck exposed and naked, his beard untrimmed, his linen soiled and torn, his countenance browned by all weathers, and furrowed by abstinence and mortification; such was the picture presented by these religious mendicants, who (I speak of their first and best time), with weariless activity, traversed land and sea, preaching the gospel of Christ, denying themselves all the pleasures and comforts of life; instructing the ignorant, reclaiming the guilty, and confirming in the faith those whom they esteemed the true believers. Yet these men, so vile in appearance, whose boast it was that, like their divine master, they had not where to lay their head, soon for this very reason attracted to themselves more admiration and respect than the richer monks, whose laziness increased with their luxury. The men-

red, wore a ring, and in his whole habit and carriage resembled a layman or a knight.—Pegge's *Life of Grosteste.*

dicants also devoted themselves to the unwearied pursuit of learning.* Their constant travel enlarged their minds, improved them in the knowledge of various tongues, opened their eyes to the abuses at home, which they compared with the regiment of foreign states, and noble seminaries of learning abroad, and they thus were taught a disrespect for the venerable Universities of Oxford, and Cambridge, in which they discovered errors not to be detected in the schools of Italy or France. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that amongst these mendicant orders, in their better days, were to be found, some of the best and wisest spirits of these ages. Roger Bacon, whose works even in the present day evince signs of profound and original genius, was a begging friar, and these princes amongst the schoolmen, Aquinas, Scotus, and Occham, who in many of

* We ought to distinguish periods, in forming a true judgement concerning the character, the merit or demerit, of the mendicant orders. The Friars in their golden age, and for some time after their first institution, were possessed (as is even allowed by their enemy Matthew Paris) of a great share of worth and learning, so as to excite the envy and jealousy of their monkish rivals; but in process of time they degenerated into mere ignorant vagrants, or into low and contemptible agents for the court of Rome.—PEGGE'S *Grostestc*, p. 146.

their disputations showed themselves not only most subtile arguers, but bold innovators upon the established tenets of the Romish Church, were mendicants, indebted for their support to the charity of the well-disposed, but in the midst of their abject poverty, the companions of Kings, and the arbitrators of the world's opinion. And here I may mention a pleasant story, which shows that these friars, though generally so poorly habited, were poor only in garb—and not in spirit, and, in addition, exceeding cunning tools of the Pope. Many years before the time of Wickliff, in the days of that learned and pious prelate, Robert Grosteste, Bishop of London, two English Franciscans habited like beggars, but with a Papal bull concealed beneath their cassock, presented themselves before King Henry the Third, and, with all submission, entreated to be allowed to beg an alms through the kingdom for their father the Pope. The King, struck with the humility of the request, and the self-sacrificing appearance of the suitors, hesitated not a moment to grant them their request, upon which these sons of St Francis doffed with all speed, their coats and cowls,

and arrayed themselves gallantly in the purple robe worn by papal legates,* mounted on proud horses, with splendid trappings, and riding to the palaces of the highest prelates, demanded many thousand marks for the contributions of their dioceses. When they came to Grosteste, who, from his admiration of their vow of poverty, had been ever a steady patron of their order, they required no less than six thousand marks as his contribution. "Who are you?" said Grosteste.—"Poor Franciscans, who are asking an alms for our father the Pope."—"Franciscans!" cried the bishop, in great amazement and profound grief, to witness such degeneracy in the order—"Out upon you! Your demand is, with all reverence to his Holiness, dishonourable. It concerns not me alone, but the whole body of the people; nor will I give an answer to it, till the sense of the kingdom is taken on the subject." Upon which these unblushing renegades to their order, ambled away to the rich house of St Alban's, where they met with no more favourable reception.

* Pegge's Grosteste, p. 210.

Such was the character of that order of religious men, who had begun to be very famous long before the days of John Wickliff, and to raise themselves up against the power of the University, by seducing into their order great numbers of the most forward youths in England, so that where formerly in the colleges thousands of students had resorted, were scarcely to be found so many hundreds.* As far back as the year 1251, these preaching friars had taken exception at some of the statutes made by the University; especially that one by which it was decreed, "That no person should be allowed to proceed to take his doctor's grade

* The mendicant orders had their origin under the pontificate of Innocent the Third, after the Lateran Council held in 1215. They soon split into innumerable sects and divisions, till, in 1272, they were reduced by Gregory X. into four great divisions—the Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelites, and the Hermits of St Augustin. The Dominicans were founded in 1220, by Dominico Guzman, a fiery Spaniard, who devoted his life to the extermination of the Albigenses, and other heretics. The order was introduced into England in 1221. The Franciscans were founded nearly about the same time, by Francis of Assisi, an Italian enthusiast; and their order was introduced into England under Henry the Third. Mosheim Ecclesiast. Hist. by Maclaine, vol. III. p. 195, 196.

in divinity, unless he had before been a regent of arts, either in that or in some other university."* And another ordinance, which they could ill stomach, was that which prescribed to all persons certain forms of scholastic exercises. Their poverty caused them to except against this first, and as for proceeding in the regular forms of scholastic exercises, their great pride, and their superior knowledge, made them imagine themselves unworthy to be tied by the common trammels of university discipline. For this reason, they anxiously endeavoured to have the statute repealed. They affirmed, that they entered generally into the order of friars very young, and before they could have a power of ruling in arts; that when living under the rules of the order, although well instructed in philosophy by grave masters amongst themselves, they could not, for their poverty, continue at the University till such time as they had taken their degree; and that, prior to the statute, they might have proceeded to become doctors of divinity, but were now disabled and cut off from such preferment. These disputes

* Lewis, p. 5. Ant. Wood, vol. I. Ann, p. 243, 322.

beginning about the middle of the 13th century, increased towards the year 1285, by the conduct of one Friar Knapwell, a Dominican, and a man of great talents and firmness, qualities which his enemies, as is general in such cases, stigmatized by the names of free-thinking and obstinacy. This Knapwell broached many opinions contrary to the received Catholic faith; amongst other tenets maintaining, "That a man is not bound to rest on the authority of the Pope, or of any priest or doctor, but on the Holy Scriptures alone."* He in his turn was violently opposed by John Peckham, a Franciscan, at this time Archbishop of Canterbury, who, although he had written a treatise, "On the utter Vanity of Worldly Possessions,"† took violent offence at Friar Knapwell's preaching against ecclesiastical pluralities; and having called a solemn council of orthodox dependants, caused the errors of Knapwell to be condemned, and their supporters excommunicated. When this council was sitting, and the archbishop in mitred pomp, encircled by his proud suffragans in

* Rapin, vol. I. p. 479, Book X. State of the Church.
† Tanner Biblioth. sub nomine Peckham.

their robes, imagined that none dared resist their decrees, Hugh de Manchester, the provincial, poorly apparelled in the dress of his order, walked into the midst of them, and told the prelate to his face, that neither he, nor any one else in the world, except their holy father the Pope, had any jurisdiction over their order. Having done which, he threw down on the table his appeal to Rome, and walking out as boldly as he had entered, the matter came to an end for the present.*

But the leaven of this dissension continuing long to ferment in England, matters at last came to a violent head in the fourth year of our second Edward's reign, when the complaints of the friars appear to have been both rational and pious. Indeed, they present an uncommon instance of the love of the truth, in this age of error, for we find them affirming, that they were not allowed to read the Bible, *Biblice*, as it was called, that is, to consult the pure text of Scripture, unexplained and unperverted by any comment of man's wisdom. "It behoved them," they said, "first, to know the sense of

* Knapwell, called by Tanner, Claypole. Ant. Wood, vol. I. p. 323.

holy learning, which is by reading on the Bible, and afterward to treat on hard questions;" whereas, by the University statutes, men were first sent to study the sentences, in order to become bachelors in divinity, and were only then, after obtaining this grade, permitted the free study of the Scriptures; although many were fit to read the word of life, who were not fit to read the word of Peter Lombard. By which evil institutions, said the friars, and with good reason, the order and method of doctrine is perverted, and the numbers lessened of those who read the Bible.*

At this time, however, these infantine struggles of the human mind, to get at the truth, were put down by the weighty hand of university discipline;† yet the controversies between the friars and the University, continued with divers success, sometimes of the one party, sometimes of the other, according to the different opinions regarding their order and institution, entertained by successive popes and kings, from this time till about the middle of

* Ant. Wood, vol. I. p. 377, 378.
† Ant. Wood, Annals, vol. I. p. 384.

the reign of Edward the Third, that heroic king, whose single weakness was the falling in love in his old age with Mistress Alice Pearce.

I have been thus somewhat particular in giving an account of the sect of the begging friars, and the controversies between them and the universities, because I have found no author who has done them justice; concluding, perhaps, that since Wickliff first signalized his genius by an attack upon this order of men, there could therefore be nothing good about them, which we see was a most untrue inference. To return then to our story, these friars, about the year 1360, had degenerated much from their primitive rules, and although there were still some famous men amongst them, the generality were idle, corrupted, and ignorant. Their pride and their petulance increasing with these causes, they began to clamour much against the ordinances of the University; and by representing the learning there cultivated as ridiculous, by petitioning the King against the statutes, appealing to the Pope, insulting the chancellor, and treating the proc-

tors and regents with extreme contumely, they embroiled matters again to a great degree; inasmuch, too, as they made themselves odious to the University, they, by reason of a certain insinuating courtesy, and a cameleon-like pliability of character, came to be highly beloved by the people, and to such good effect did they use their old arts of seducing young men of fortune and expectation into their order, that "the colleges were left desolate, and the University like a lodge in a wilderness.* At this time also, or a few years before it, a matter of obstinate controversy arose, by the preaching of one Roger Conway, a minorite, who, in a sermon delivered at London, gave out many strange opinions regarding the poverty of Christ; and in order to justify the mendicant profession of the friars, represented our Saviour and his apostles as having nothing of their own, but begging for a livelihood from door to door.† This Conway, who was a very

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 6.

† Conway was in such high authority, that his minorite brethren looked on him as little less than a God. He was elected provincial of the order, and preached publicly in London, "On the Poverty of Christ." He wrote a work,

subtle Welshman, and provincial of his order, was attacked violently by Richard Fitzrauf, Archbishop of Armagh, in a sermon preached at Avignon, in which he exposed, in very lively colours, the arts of these cunning friars. "As I came to-day," said he, "out of my hostle, who should I meet in this far land, but an honest English gentleman, a singular good friend of mine; and having inquired the cause of his resorting hither, the poor man, with tears, told me that his son, a promising youth, studying at Oxford, had been cogg'd away by these devilish friars; and although he had tried every way to get him back, all had failed, so that he was at last forced to come in person to Avignon, to sue for his release from the court of Rome, then there."*

But if the reader ask me in return what

"De Confessionibus per Regulares Audiendis," preserved in MS. in C. C. C. Camb. T. 8. See Tanner, voce' Conway.

* Armachanus' Oration, entitled "Defensio Curatorum Adversus Fratres Mendicantis," is preserved in MS. in C. C. C. Oxon, and was printed in Paris in 1496. It was pronounced at Avignon, before the Pope and the Cardinals. If we may believe Bale, (but he is far from accurate,) the whole New Testament was translated into the Irish language, by Armachanus. The manuscript, he says, was discovered hid

had the Primate of Armagh to do at Avignon, let him know that the friars, enraged at his injurious treatment of them, had accused him of heresy; and that the Pope had cited him to plead his own cause in person before his holiness in this city, where he soon after died, and bequeathed his sword of controversy and his quarrel with the friars, to the hands of Wickliff; and very boldly did he manage the fight, so that the friars soon perceived that the weapons of warfare were in far more powerful hands than they had ever before met with. He attacked them both in oral discourse, and in various writings, the latter of which remain, and by the acute and virulent language in which they are expressed, provoked his adversaries to a great degree of fury against him.* In this controversy, Wickliff's principal treatises were entitled, "Of the Po-

in the wall of a church, in 1530. Fox, in his Martyrol. vol. I. p. 381, says, that the whole Bible was translated by him; and Usher tells us, that many fragments of it were still preserved in Ireland. See Tanner, Biblioth. vocæ Fitzrauf.

* These disputes regarding the poverty of our Saviour, broke out again between the mendicant orders and the established clergy, in the reign of Henry the Sixth, by the preaching of two Carmelite friars, Parker and Holden. Turner's History of England, vol. III. p. 132.

verty of Christ," "Against Able Beggary," and "Of Idleness in Beggary." And the reader will probably be pleased to see the very words of this great writer, wherein he draws a parallel between the poverty of Christ, as shown in the Gospel, and the impudent and sturdy mendicity which was practised by the friars. Here they are taken from a manuscript, entitled, "Objections of Freres."

"Christ lived on alms of Mary Magdalen, and other holy men and women, without axing or constreyning. Christ bad his apostles and disciples that they should not beare a satchell ne scrip; but look what man is able to hear the gospel, and eat and drink therein, and pass not thence, and not pass fro house to house. St Paul laboured or travailed with his hands for him, and for men that weren with him; and coveted neither gold, ne silver, ne clothes of men that he taught, to give other teachers ensample to do the same in time of need.* St Paul biddeth that men that wilen live in idle-

* In the treatise, entitled, "John Wickliff against the Order of Friars," published by James, p. 25, I find, after the words, in time of need, "also St Peter fished, after Christ's resurrection."

ness, and curiosity, and not traveile, shullen not eat. St Clement ordaîneth that Christen men shulden not beg openly; and for to put away this begging, St Austin maketh tweie books, how monks owen to traveile with their hands, for their liflode—sith open begging is thus sharply damned in holy writ, it is a foule error to meyntene it; but it is more error to scie that Christ was such a beggar, sith then he must have been contrary to his own law. * * It is a leaving the commandement of Christ, of giving alms to poor feeble men, to poor crooked, to poor blind men, and to bedreide men, to give alms to hypocrites that feyn them holy and needy, when they ben strong in body, and have overmuch riches, both in great waste houses, and precious clothes and great feasts, and many jewels and tresour. That poor men are slen with this false begging, sith the freres taken falsely from them their worldly goods, by which they shulden susteyn their bodily life, and deceiven rich men in their alms; and meyntenen or conforten them to live in falseness against Jesu Christ. For sith there were poor men enough to taken men's alms, before that freres camen in, and

the earth is now more barren than it was, other freres or poor men moten wanten of this alms. But freres by subtil hypocrisie gotten to themselves, and letten the poor men to have these alms."*

The chief accusations which I find Wickliff bringing against the Friars, are these,—That this order of men is against the gospel, because they pretend that their own regulations are more perfect than Christ's; because they hinder the free preaching of God's holy word; because, contrary to the precepts and example of the holy apostles, they encourage idleness and beggary, abstracting for the support of their own useless lives, the alms and charity which belong to the poor, miserable, and naked; because they steal away and entice children from their parents, and cause them to enter into their order; because they flatter the people, not reproving them for their sins, defraud the poor curates and true priests, and under the specious show of poverty and self-denial, conceal great riches, living in sumptuous houses and cloisters, on rich viands and

* See the Treatise of Wickliff against the Orders of Friars, p. 25, published by James. And see Lewis's Life, p. 9.

in splendid apparel; because they have brought heresies into the church, by asserting that in the holy sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Christ's body was accident without subject, against the express words of our Saviour, and the authority of Austin, Jerome, Ambrose, Isidore, and other saints; because they are notorious promoters of strifes and dissensions, instead of being peace-makers, children of Judas Iscariot, given to sell Christ's word for money; supporters of usury and covetousness, full of vaine and changeable ceremonies, returning evil for good, mispenders of the treasure of the land, factors for the Pope; and, in fine, most perilous enemies to holy church, and to all our land.*

These are the points of accusation which Wickliff, espousing the cause of the University against its enemies and revilers, brought forward, both in speech and writing, with an eloquence and strength of reason, not equalled before his time. He used also in this controversy his own maternal tongue, and not the then monkish jargon of the Latin; so that

* Wickliff's Treatise against the Orders of Friars, printed by James in 1608.

what he wrote or spoke was addressed, not to learned clerks alone, but to the generality of the gentry and people of the land; and thus it came to have much more force and weightiness. For a good book, or an excellent discourse, shut up in a learned language, may cast a few faint rays within the walls of a college or a cloister, but can never cause knowledge to run and be multiplied; while even a very little treatise, composed in the mother tongue of the country, is like a beacon on a hill top, which spreads a light and heat, that every eye can see, and in which the meanest hind and way-faring man may participate.

But with respect to the merits of this controversy with the friars, it is somewhat difficult, after so long an interval of time, accurately or duly to estimate them. Thus far is certain, that in it, Wickliff had not yet taken up his strongest ground, as a reformer of religion, or an enemy to the church of Rome. It appears to have been a much more insulated and private quarrel, in which, as a faithful and courageous son of the University, he stepped forward to give battle to a set of men who attacked its privileges, and erected themselves

into an independent and dangerous freedom. Nor had he in this contest the same weight of truth on his side, as in his future embroilments with the church; for although the friars mendicant had certainly departed from the first principles on which their societies were formed, and had grown collectively, rich, ignorant, and luxurious, yet these principles, with regard to the poverty of Christ, the obligation of preaching in their travels through the country, and living upon alms, were, on the whole, more correspondent to the lives of our Saviour and his apostles than Wickliff was willing to allow; and it may be remarked, that his observations, with regard to our Saviour's commanding his apostles not to carry a scrip, are somewhat strained in the interpretation; for, in the context where this is enjoined, it is added, that the apostles are to take nothing for their journey, neither bread with them, nor money in their purse, and that on entering a house, there are they to abide till they depart from that place,* injunctions which clearly imply that these first and holiest teachers of our

* St Matthew, chap. 10, verse 4.

religion were dependent for their support upon voluntary alms,—were poor and needy, travelling to and fro with no possessions of their own; and if not actual mendicants, at least in truth pilgrims. And our Saviour himself was the example of this poverty. He had not where to lay his head, and passed many a night in desert places, with no covering but those heavens, which were the work of his own hands.

There is one other thing which I cannot easily pardon to Wickliff, in this his first controversy, which is, the opprobrious epithets of scorn and contumely that he has heaped upon the friars. He calls them simple idiots, and damned devils of hell; man-slayers, more cruel than the soldan of the Saracens; nests of antichrist clerks, and nurses of the fiend; children of Iscariot, and fellow-helpers of *Sathanus*, in strangling men's souls,* names which are as little reconcilable to Christian courtesy, as to that artificial imitation of it which goes by the name of worldly good-breeding.†

* Johne Wickliffe against the orders of Friars, pages 22, 30, 31, 52, by James.

† I may just remark, in concluding this part of my story that Wickliff, in his arguments directed against the evil practices of the friars in kidnapping children into their convents,

The disputes between the friars and the university, continued till the year 1366, when Parliament interfered, and pronounced a decision which favoured the mendicants, in as far as it annulled that decree of the university, which provided, that the friars should not take any youths into their convents under the age of eighteen; but it interdicted them from procuring any bulls from Rome, to annul the statutes of the university touching scholastic exercises, and gave the king of England the sole authority, of determining the differences between the parties. Notwithstanding all this, these mendicants, relying on the favour of the king, and being confident because they were much beloved by the people, contrived, through the influence of William Selling, the prior of Christ Church, Canterbury, to procure from the Pope a dispensation from that statute of the university, which required persons to be regents in arts before they proceeded as doctors in divinity.

This Prior Selling, who so much favoured the friars, was singularly learned, and had been

is indebted to Richard Fitzrauf, or Armachanus, already mentioned as a bitter enemy of the mendicant orders.

educated in Italy under Politian, by whose instructions he became a perfect scholar, not only in the Latin, but in the Greek language, then quite unknown in England; and when in Italy, he had, at great expense and trouble, collected many rich and beautifully-illuminated manuscripts of the best authors of Greece and Rome, and erected a library in his apartments at Canterbury, in which he took great delight. But some time after the death of Selling, it happened on an evil day that Mr Richard Ligton came to visit the prior, and to claim a night's lodging in his progress through the country, whose attendants, after their masters had supped, chose to partake too unsparingly of the convent wines, and in this bacchanalian bout the apartments where they sat at their cups caught fire, and communicated to the library. It was a sorry sight to behold Prior Selling's beautiful manuscripts consumed in the fire; or if saved, which was the lot of a few, rescued in so shrivelled a state, with their golden letters and rich illuminations so lamentably defaced, that no one could tell what they once were.*

* See Tanner Biblioth. voce Celling.

But to come back to Wickliff: although he could not put down the friars, yet he showed such zeal and ability in the quarrel, that his considerate mother, the university, rewarded him bountifully by making him, in 1361, master of Baliol College, and in 1365 warden of Canterbury Hall, which had been founded only two years before by Simon de Islep, archbishop of Canterbury.* As this promotion of Wickliff's to such wardenship, led to his quarrel with the Pope, and to the propagation of his reformed opinions, it is important to be somewhat particular in the account of it. The matter then was thus.

In the year 1361, Simon de Islep,† or Ystolepe, who was secretary to Edward the III. and keeper of the Privy Seal, as well as archbishop of Canterbury, taking much to heart the great decay of learning at Oxford, founded a hall in the parish of St Mary's, which was to maintain eleven scholars and a warden, and this he named Canterbury Hall. Of these persons, the warden and three scholars were to

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 10. Wood's Hist. and Antiq. p. 651.

† See Tanner Biblioth. voce Islep.

be monks of Canterbury, and the remaining eight to be seculars. The founder first chose for his warden, Henry de Wodehull, a monk of Christ Church, Canterbury; but he proving an outrageously troublesome and pestilent fellow, and transforming the new establishment into a den of intrigue and tumult, instead of a quiet retreat, wherein learning might prune her wings, and pursue her contemplations, Simon the founder turned Wodehull, with the three scholars, out of their office, and thought proper to alter his original design, by making the wardenship an office to be held by a secular. For this office, in 1365, he chose John Wickliff,* on account of the honesty of his life, his laudable conversation, and knowledge of letters, and thinking that his institution would thrive better if there were no regulars admitted, he appointed William Selby, William Middleworth, and Richard Bengor, clerks of York, Sarum, and Oxford, to fill the places of the ejected monks. Nor is it improbable that Islep and Wickliff had been companions in their youthful studies, for they were both

* The "Instrument of Collation" will be found in Lewis's appendix to his Life of Wickliff, No. 3, p. 290.

educated at Merton College, and very nearly contemporaries. Be this as it may, the archbishop soon after died, and Simon de Langham, a benedictine monk, and afterwards a cardinal, was promoted to the primacy. This son of the church had endured in his time many notable reverses of fortune. At one time he was chancellor of England; at another he was disgraced by the king, and forced, from very poverty, to sell his Episcopal cope,* but he continued ever a firm friend to the regulars; and, on his translation to the see of Canterbury, the monks of that priory applied to him, and prevailed so far as to induce him most unjustly to eject Wickliff from the wardenship, along with three other fellows, upon which he and his brethren appealed to the Pope; a clear proof that, down to as late a date as 1367, he was a faithful subject of that unrighteous sovereignty, of which he became afterwards so bold an opponent.

It was in this year, 1367, that, according to the prediction of a notable astrologer of those days, Mr John Eschenden, there appeared

* Darts. Canterbury, p. 152.

at Oxford the great conjunction between Jupiter and Saturn, *in signo scorpii*, portending, as he declared, amongst numerous disasters and accidents, the arising of a new sect and prophet, and grievous mutations in the church; and the antiquary John Leland informs us he had seen a little mathematical tractate by this Eschenden, entitled, "De Conjunctione Saturni et Jovis in Scorpione, cum permutatione triplicitatis," in the hands of Thomas Grynæus;* in which, with great learning, and not impiously, as some mad diviners, but building his conclusions upon the modest and certain truths of permitted science,† he dived into the secrets of divine providence, and showed that the new prophet here meant was none other than John Wickliff.—But to return. This appeal having been made, the matter was carried to the Romish court, and there remained in dependence for three years; during which interval there arose another cause of dissension

* Leland de Script. Britt. p. 344, vol. 2.

† Bishop Grosteste wrote a Treatise de Prognosticatione Temporum, in which, from the planetary influences, he formed conjectures or prognostications regarding the times. Pegge's Life, p. 19.

between the Pope and Wickliff, which certainly did much to prejudice that proud tyrant against him. It was this.

In the year 1213, that weak and wicked monarch King John, having been deserted for his vices, by all the brave and good amongst his barons, and threatened with war by the French king, was compelled to court the assistance of the Roman court; upon which, as he was ever as mean in his distress as he was insolent and cruel in his prosperity, he resigned his kingdoms of England and Ireland into the hands of the Pope, and in token of his being a vassal to the holy see, engaged to pay the yearly rent of seven hundred marks for England, and three hundred for Ireland. He then did homage for his kingdoms, presented the stipulated price of his subjection, and formally laid his regal crown and sceptre at the feet of the legate Pandulpho, who, to show the grandeur of his master, spurned with his embroidered slippers the money offered by the king.* Such was then the insolence of these satraps of the Papal throne. What became of this claim after the

* Rapin's Hist. of England, p. 272.

death of John is not well ascertained; but, in the year 1266, Pope Urban V. imagining that the coffers of England's treasury had been recruited by Edward the III. and by his heroic son's victories in France, deemed the juncture proper to demand the tribute, insisting, and that in very haughty terms, that thirty years' arrears were due. Edward, however, was not of a temper to be thus treated, and, as he and his houses of Parliament were ever on confidential and affectionate terms with each other, he immediately laid the Pope's letter before them for their consideration, to which that august body gave this stout answer:—"King John of England had no power to bring his realm into such servitude without the consent of his Parliament; and if necessity compelled him to such a proceeding, the engagement was null, as being contrary to his coronation oath." They moreover stated, "That if the Pope should attempt, by any means whatever, to prosecute his unjust pretensions, the nation should with all their power oppose him."* Not long thereafter Urban, who ne-

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 19, and Rapin's Hist. of England, vol. I. p. 438.

ver failed to have assistance in his difficulties from his devoted children the monks, procured one of these of the more learned sort, to publish a defence of his claim, wherein, by many such vain and futile arguments as monks were wont to use in those days, he attempted to prove that the realm of England could not shake itself free from this homage due to the Pope. This book had great reputation; and although it could have no power of circulating amongst the people, (for the miraculous discovery of printing still lay dormant amongst man's inventions,) yet it unsettled the minds of the higher and more learned ranks, and raised doubts and difficulties, which they plainly saw, yet could not plausibly answer.

At this crisis Wickliff came forward, and taking up this dreaded book, so ably handled the controversy, replied to its propositions with such strength of reason, and with the weapons of honest truth and clear common sense so buffeted the poor monk, that, with all his armour of artificial logic, and his meshes of sophistry, he could not save himself, but was forced to beat a speedy retreat, followed by his

troops of discomfited syllogisms;* to so utter a rout did Wickliff put these vain and intolerable barbarisms, so thickly sown in the logical and theological treatises of this age.

From this work two consequences flowed. The author of it became known to the court, and especially to John of Gaunt, the son of Edward the Third, upon whom, now that his father was somewhat aged, and his heir-apparent, the Black Prince, deeply engaged in his Spanish expedition, much of the regimen of the realm depended. And this friendship with so high a personage, stood Wickliff in good part when he most required it. But the second consequence was of a very different stamp; for the Pope finding himself thus rudely attacked in his tenderest point, by one who was then a litigant in his court, scrupled not to allow his passion and resentments to pervert his justice; and in his appeal concerning the Wardenship of Canterbury-Hall, thundered out a sentence, condemning Wickliff with his friends, and reinstating Wodehull the

* Wickliff's work is entitled, "Determinatio de Dominio," MS. in Bod. Lib. in Hyperoo, 163. In it Wickliff styles himself the king's peculiar clerk or chaplain.

monk, and his brother drones, in the vacated stalls. This he did by his bull, dated at Viterbo, on the 28th of May 1370. And there can be little doubt, that the sentence of Urban induced Wickliff to examine more narrowly into the true foundations of that antichristian dominion, of whose tyranny he now found himself the victim.*

It was about two years after such expulsion, when this true and bold spirit had felt its own strength in controversy, and was roused into vigilant activity by a flagrant act of injustice, that he took his degree at Oxford, of Doctor of Divinity, and began to read public lectures upon that subject in the University, Providence thus placing him on an eminence from which his light could shine forth to the blind multitudes who surrounded him. And now it was, that, having been convinced by patient study, and by diligent observation, of the corruptions of the Roman hierarchy; having from his youth up to the time when his mind had grown to the full strength of manhood, perused the Holy Scriptures, with an earnest desire

* Lewis's Life, p. 21.

to discover the truth, and sincere prayers that God's grace would illuminate his mind in the search, he came to the resolution of devoting all his faculties to the overturning that spiritual tyranny, under which so many millions of mankind had groaned for more than a thousand years. But as the stake was great which he was now about to play, no less depending on it than the overturning this huge fabric of despotism, whose roots were spread into the utmost parts of the habitable earth; so he deemed it necessary to begin his attack cautiously, and not all at once to shock the prejudices of mankind, by tearing off, with too rough a hand, the gaudy veil which concealed the inward iniquity of the whole system of the Papal government. He determined, therefore, first to proceed in his public lectures, with that attack of the mendicant friars, against whom he had already written somewhat; and whose present laziness, ignorance, and manifold corruptions, formed, indeed, a great contrast to what they had once been in those better times, when, in the beginning of the thirteenth century, Agnello of Pisa opened his Franciscan school at Oxford,*

* Life of Grosteste, p. 23, 147.

and Robert Grosteste delivered therein his lectures on divinity and philosophy. The friars had now become the mere tools of the papacy, having degenerated into a set of unbookish, mercenary vagrants, whom the church of Rome employed on all occasions to blear, with their foolish fables and traditions, the eyes of the lower classes, and instead of instructing in the road of life their poor and perishing flock, to make them tenfold more the children of sin and sorrow than before.

These public lectures of Wickliff, in which he exposed the wicked lives and heretical opinions of the friars mendicant, leaving it to the minds of those who heard him, to apply his remarks on the apostacy of the children, to the still deeper apostacy of their mother, the church of Rome, made a great stir in the University, and it was delightful to see how deep was the impression made by the first sounds of that eloquent voice of scriptural truth, which had so long been drowned by the vain babblings of Popish idolatry. And no wonder, for although it is true that the mind is weighed down by that deep load of sin, which we bring with us into the world; and notwithstanding we are of our-

selves both poor, and miserable, and ignorant, yet even in the darkest periods of the history of man's aberrations from God, when once the still clear voice of truth and of the Bible is heard, there will always be a remnant who will be roused from their lethargy by its awful warnings, and heavenly consolations, who will hear it with joyful eagerness, and into whose hearts, prepared as they will be by the gracious dew of the Holy Spirit, the good seed will descend to bring forth a hundred fold. And so it was with Wickliff's congregation, and so it will be in these modern days, wherever there is a faithful pastor, who will preach the Bible, be the corner of the vineyard in which he is placed, soever steril and unproductive. As to his accusations of the friars, it is unnecessary to revert to this subject, because already, in a former part of this life, the reader is informed of the principal heads of his complaints against them. From these first attacks he proceeded, yet slowly and cautiously, to give out in his lectures some new opinions in divinity, and to treat at first with light ridicule, and afterwards more directly, and with more pointed condemnation, some of the most glaring errors

of the church of Rome. At length, finding his audience prepared to go along with him, seeing that he had a strong party in the schools, and that, by the popularity of his manner of preaching, many of the nobility and barons had espoused his opinions, and with that open and courageous honesty which distinguishes the English people, were ready to adopt and defend his quarrel; he boldly threw off all disguise, and directed the whole force of his eloquence against the fundamental errors of popery.

To these new opinions, we must here advert, since they are to be considered as the earliest and prelusive flashes of heavenly truth which broke upon the world after a long and starless night of ignorance and tyranny. And greatly was it to our honour as a nation, that from the quiver of England these arrows of light and wrath were first sent ringing upon the corslet of the giant with the triple diadem.

The most important subjects upon which the Christian world are concerned in their religious belief, have been well divided by a grave divine* into these heads:—

* Dr Thomas James, keeper of the Bodleian Library, in 1608, whose work is quoted in the next page.

1. Scripture. 2. Traditions. 3. The Pope. 4. The Church. 5. Justification: 6. Merits. 7. The Blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

Upon all of these points, Wickliff dissented in his lectures from the long-established tenets of the Romish Church; and although we must not enter at great length into his disquisitions (a task which would require a head profoundly read in controversial divinity), yet it is absolutely necessary, in this account of his life, to give his leading remarks and general conclusions upon these cardinal topics. And first, as to Scripture, although the questions which have been agitated regarding it are very many, yet the most important may be included in these four words,—The number, the sufficiency, the interpretation, and, lastly, the communication of the books of the Old and New Testament.*

Now as to the number of books canonical, Wickliff followed the opinion of St Jerome,

* This account of Wickliff's doctrines on these points, is taken chiefly from a little volume, now of extreme rarity, published by Dr James, the learned keeper of the Bodleian Library, in 1608, and entitled, "An Apology for John Wickliff, showing his Conformity with the now Church of England."

which is also that adopted by the Church of England, reckoning in all, twenty-two books,* with the four major and the twelve minor Prophets; and excluding the rest, under the name of Apocryphal; "not," as he observes in his Treatise *De Veritate Scripturæ*, "because they are to be discredited of falsehood; but because the church militant should not believe them *explicatè*, as if they were authenticall; and he thinketh it to savour of folly and vain curiosity, for a man to strive about the truth or proper passions of these books Apocrypha, where there are so manie besides which are very sensibly and plainly authenticall."

With regard, again, to the mode of discerning books canonical from the Apocryphal books, he is equally explicit, recommending us, 1. To look into the New Testament, and to see what books of the Old Testament are therein cited and authenticated by the Holy Ghost.† And in case the first criterion does not serve, he then declares it competent for

* "Satis est pro sua militia habere 22 libros de Veteri Testamento authenticos."—*De Verit. Scrip.* MS. p. 110.

† "Auctorizatio eorum in Novo Testamento."—*De Verit. Scrip.* p. 95, and 109. In the translation of the Latin passages I have generally adopted Dr James's words.

the "Church of God, discreetly examining any book, to consider whether the like doctrine be delivered by the Holy Ghost elsewhere in the Scripture."*

The second question, as to the sufficiency of Scripture for our salvation, was one of supreme importance, which it was impossible for Wickliff, as a conscientious expounder of divine truth, to avoid; and yet which he could not enter on, without attacking the Church of Rome in their strongest holds, and most lucrative spiritual monopolies. For such was the miserable condition of these times, that the pure text of Scripture was kept, by the lying and ignorant clergy, entirely in the back ground; a volume sealed and shut up from the people, or if ever referred to, garbled, glossed over, deformed, and truncated by their gross intellect and sensual commentaries, and mixed up with lying legends, scurril chronicles and fables, all of them utterly repugnant to God's law and Christ's gospel. From all this it followed, that the people, fed by such husks and coarse rinds of man's invention, relying for their salvation upon the mouth-

* James's Wickliff's Conformity, p. 7.

mummery of priests, clinging to relics, masses, pilgrimages, making gods to themselves of wood and stone, or out of the rotten remains of poor sinners like themselves, became at last totally reprobate, and were content to lie down wallowing in a beastly and swinish ignorance. From this state they were suddenly awakened by the trumpet of Wickliff, before which the splendid fabrics of prelatic tyranny, the strong castles of error and delusion, came tumbling to the ground, as of old the walls of Jericho before the destroying blast of Joshua.

"God's will," said that bold and faithful minister, "is plainly revealed in the Two Testaments, which may be called Christ's law, or the faith of the church; and Christ's law sufficeth by itself to rule Christ's church, which a Christian man well understanding, may thence gather sufficient knowledge during his pilgrimage here upon earth."* Again he observes, "All truth is contained in Holy Scrip-

* In the work entitled, *Diversorium Lollardorum*, he says, "Nihil inquiunt præter Scripturas Sacras accipimus." Again, in the Treatise, Expositio Decalogi, p. 5, "Lex Dei patula in duobus Testamentis. Scriptura ergo est Lex Christi, et fides Ecclesiæ."

ture; so that what disputation soever is not originally thence to be deduced, must be accounted profane. We ought to admit of no science; no conclusion that is not approved by the Scripture;* no law, unless it be either subordinate to this law, or help to bring us unto it; no court besides the court of heaven; and no parson, not excepting even the Pope's Holiness, daring to dispense with Holy Scripture, ought to be any longer accounted a Christian; nay, though," says he, "we had a hundred Popes, and all the friars in the world were turned into cardinals, yet ought we to trust more to the law of the Gospel, than all this multitude."

And as, on the one hand, Wickliff, in his zeal for the Holy Scripture, as in itself all sufficient for our salvation, magnifies and extols it as that heavenly logick and grammar, which is above all the logicks and grammars of the world,† adjuring all men as true sons, not to

* "Cum in Scriptura Sancta sit omnis veritas, patet quod omnis disputatio, quæ in Scriptura Sacra non habet originem, est prophana. Non oportet admittere scientiam vel conclusionem, quæ non habet testimonium ex Scriptura."—*De Verit. Scrip.* p. 39, 66.

† "Logicos et Grammaticos oportet si submittere ad de-

goe about to infringe this will and testament of their heavenly Father, but rather to be ready to defend it unto death; * secular men by power and strength, and clergymen by reasons and arguments; so, on the other, he doth not spare those that hold the contrary doctrine; and this was no less than the whole body of the Catholick clergy; but assures us that they deserve not the name, because they have not the faith of Christians; that they are doing their best to enlarge the limits of the kingdom of darkness; and instead of divines, are nothing less than the champions of the devil.‡ With regard to the interpretation of Holy Scripture, Wickliff departed at once from that doctrine of the Romish church, "that the Pope was the sole judge of all controversies, sole interpreter of all dark and obscure places of Holy Writ." †—"No man li-

scendum in Scriptura tam novam Grammaticam, quam Logicam."—*De Verit. Scrip.* p. 7.

* "Omne genus humanum debet stare pro defensione veritatis Scripturæ, ex integro usque ad mortem."—*Ib.* p. 161.

† "Quicunque non vere fundaverit vel vitam suam vel sententiam in Scriptura S. sed adversatur sibi et suis professoribus, hic obliquat ut pugil Diabole atque hereticus."—*Ib.* p. 189.

‡ James's Wickliff's Comformity, p. 10.

ving," says he, "is to be credited for his mere authoritie's sake, unless he can show Scripture for the maintenance of his opinion."* And he goes on to affirm, "that the *true literal sense* of the Scripture, which the Holy Ghost doth principally intend, is that which we are chiefly to regard; striking thus at the root of those mystical glosses and hidden allegories which some hair-brained, conceited Papists, pretend to discover in the Bible. It is needless," continues he, "for a man to cite Scripture, unless it be pertinent to the meaning of the author, which being of itself hard to be found out, because a carnal man doth not easily conceive the things of God, therefore, by God's providence, which never faileth his church in things necessary to salvation, some are illuminated and enlightened from above, for the finding out of the true and Catholick sense of the Scripture; which illumination and irradiation of theirs, is much confirmed and warranted unto us, by their holy lives and conver-

* "Nulli credendum est per locum ab auctoritate, nisi in quantum prægognizat verbum Domini."—*De Verit Scrip.* p. 109. "Non debet credi creaturæ nisi de quanto loquitur conformiter ad Scripturam," p. 206. "Sensus literalis Scripturæ sensus quam Spiritus Sanctus indidit," p. 27.

sations;* and to continue such illumination in the mother church, is the duty and function of divines. These divines, however," he continues, "are men, and may easily erre, by making false postilles, or bringing untrue glosses; therefore he willeth them to observe certain means, and prescribeth to them certain bounds or limits within the which they are to contain themselves," which means he accounts five. 1. To looke that the books of Scripture are not corrupted. 2. To have the knowledge of the Scripture logick, by which he understands the phraze and manner of speaking commonly used in the Bible. 3. He affirms that there is required a continual collation and comparing of Scripture, with Scripture. 4. A virtuous and devout disposition in the student. 5. And, most of all, an inward instruction and information of the chief master Christ Jesus.†

In the last place, as to that most vitally important subject, the communication of the Scriptures in the English tongue, to the lower

* MS. de Verit. Script. p. 75, quoted in James's Wickliff's Conformity, p. 11.

† "Primi magistri interna instructio."—*De Verit. Scrip.* p. 75.

classes, his judgement is as bold and excellent, as it was, in these days of darkness, new and dangerous. For he declares it to be a most wicked sin, to advise that the Gospel should sleep, and which did hinder it to be preached.* "The truth of God," says he, "standeth not in one language more than in the other. Christ taught the pater noster in a language understood; and therefore why maie not men write in English the Gospel, as well as other things? For clerks should joy that the people knew God's law, and certainly this heresie and blasphemy should men cast out of their hearts; for it springeth up of the fiend, and he that hindereth the dissemination of God's gospel, must be accounted cursed of God."

It was these sound principles of Christian doctrine, which, at a later period of his life, induced Wickliff to translate the whole Bible into English, for the benefit of the common people, of which great work more hereafter.

* See John Wickliff's Conformitie with the Now Church of England, p. 13, by James. See Wickliff, MS. de Verit. Scripturæ, p. 331, as quoted by James; and his Liber Miscell. p. 24, 34, and 35.

With regard to traditions, and the various popish rites and ceremonies which have been founded upon them, it was the doctrine of Wickliff that no rite or ceremony should be received in the church, but such as were derived from, or confirmed by the word of God.* He maintained that the chief prelates of the church ought to be especially careful not to surcharge or lade them with too many ceremonies;† to admit none but such as are meanes facilitating the observance of Christ's law;‡ and lastly, and mostly to beware of, preferring anie Cæsar. before our Saviour, any Pope before Christ, who is the supreme head of the church, and the chiefest prelate of our religion.‖

* MS. de Verit. Scripturæ, p. 529. A copy is in the Bodleian Library, Arch. A. 3021. See James's Work, entitled, Wickliff's Conformity to the Church of England, p. 15.—"Sunt Deo, et Ecclesiæ suæ odibiles nisi de quanto fundantur in Scriptura." De Verit. Scripturæ, p. 411.

† De Verit. Scripturæ, p. 582. "He rejected," says James, "the Popish superstitions and traditions of salt, spittle, cream, oil, and such like, their five sacraments, and five orders, and the like, which were propriæ ad inventiones commended by men, and established to gain money."—WICKLIFF'S *Conformitie*, p. 15.

‡ "Cavendum est principibus Ecclesiæ, ne onerint subditos rituum multitudine." De Verit. Scripturæ, p. 529.

‖ "Videtur probabile, quod nullæ constitutiones Præposi-

We come now to that most material point, Wickliff's opinions regarding the supremacy of the Pope, but as at the time when he first delivered his divinity lectures, his notions upon this subject were somewhat vague and unformed, (although he plainly enough gave forth doctrines which, when pushed to their consequences, did strongly militate against the supremacy of this idol,) it will be better to pass over the subject at present, and to revert to it hereafter. With regard to his doctrines upon the subject of the church, I find at first sight some little contradiction in the notions of this first protestant.* For, in his Latin treatise upon the truth of Scripture, he acknowledges the Roman church to be his mother church, and he professes, that to the utmost of his power he will defend all the privileges thereof;† and such a sentence, assuredly, if under-

torum Ecclesiæ sunt licitæ, vel a populo obligare admittendæ, nisi de quanto sunt media facilitantia ad observantiam legis Christi." Expositio Decalogi, p. 18.

* James's Conformity, p. 22.

† "Protestor publice, quod amando et venerando Romanam Ecclesiam, matrem meam, desidero et procuro defensionem omnium privilegiorum suorum." De Verit. Scrip. p. 196.

stood of the Romish church in general, would be wholly destructive of the idea of Wickliff's protestant orthodoxy; but it is not difficult, by a comparison of this sentence with other parts of his writings, to show that he calls the Roman church his mother church, solely with a reference to those worthy beginnings which she made in open profession of the gospel in Saint Paul's days; and this, indeed, is apparent in his description of those high privileges, which he sets down as belonging to the Roman church in her first and best days. He describes her as conforming herself unto Christ and his laws, so that the nearer she approached to a strict observance of his injunctions, the greater were the privileges which she enjoyed.* But with regard to those extravagant privileges, assumed by this church after she had degenerated from the simplicity of her primitive form, as if St Peter had chosen this place above all others to rule in, and Christ

* James's Conformity, p. 23, and Wickliff's MS. de Verit. Script. p. 196.—"Scio quidem ex fide Scripturæ tanquam infrangibiliter verum quod omne suum privilegium est a Deo, et de quanto secuta fuerit Christum conformius, de tanto amplioribus privilegiis insignitur."

had conferred upon all his successors the divine attribute of infallibility; it is certain that Wickliff never gave in to this extravagant error. And this is evident from these words, which I take from his treatise on the Truth of Scripture.* "God forbid," says he, "that the church, or that any man should think, that the faith of other members of the church doth depend upon this Peter, that John, or that Gregory. Yea, it may so happen, that our Lord the Pope may be ignorant of the laws of Scripture, and that the Church of England may be far better and quicker sighted, in finding out the Catholic truth, than all this Roman church of pope and cardinals being all thrust together."† So that, in truth, although in his doctrines regarding the church, upon a first superficial view, Wickliff may appear inconsistent, yet the conclusion he comes to is like most of his other doctrines, consistent and rational; namely, that he is well content to venerate the Church of

* De Verit. Script. p. 92.—"Absit Ecclesiam credere quod fides cujuscunque alieni membri Ecclesiæ dependeat ab isto Petro, Johanne, vel Gregorio."

† James's Wickliff's Conformitie, p. 23, 24.

Rome, for its antiquity and early conformity to the primitive constitutions of the apostolic age—that he is ready to follow this church above all others, as long as it follows Christ, and no farther.* And so much for his opinions regarding the church. Next we come to that vitally important subject of justification and merits, which two little words have made so great a stir in the world; and upon the small arena of whose seven syllables, so many intellectual battles have been fought.

In his treatise on the Truth of Scripture, so often quoted, Wickliff teaches us, that, †"Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is all-sufficient for salvation, and that without that faith it is impossible for any man to please God; that the merit of Christ is able by itself to redeem all mankind from hell;‡ that this sufficiency is to be understood without anie other

* James's Wickliff's Conformity, p. 24, 25, will furnish the reader with some more matter on this subject, if he is anxious to pursue it.

† De Verit. Script. p. 494, 496.—"Decreverunt Apostoli sufficere ad salvationem, fidem Domini Jesu-Christi."

‡ "Meritum Christi per se sufficit omnem hominem redimere a Gehenna." De Verit. Script. p. 552.

cause concurring, and that therefore men ought for their salvation to trust wholly to Christ, not to seek to be justified by any other way than by his death and passion, nor to be righteous by any other method than a participation of his all-perfect righteousness." And in his Commentaries upon the Psalms,* in a passage where he replies to these misguided men, who affirm that God did not all for them, but that their own merits entitle them to his favour, he breaks out into this pious sentence: "Heale us, O Lord, for nought, that is, for no merit of ours; but for thy mercy. Lord, not to our merits, but to thy mercy give thy joy. Give us grace to know that all gifts come from thy goodness. Our flesh, though it seem holy, yet is not holy. We all," continues he in his work on Scripture Truth,† "are originally sinners as Adam, and in Adam; his leprosy cleaving faster to us than Naaman's did to Gehe-

* Commentary on the Psalms, p. 474, as quoted by James in his Conformity, p. 27, as a work of Wickliff; but Mr Baber, in his list of Wickliff's works, gives this commentary to the hermit, Richard Rolle of Hampole, p. 54.

† De Verit. Script. 489.

zay; so that even the infant, before it has seen the light of this world, has this blemish inherent in its unborn members.* Of ourselves we are unable so much as to think a good thought, unless Jesus, the angel of great council, send it.† We cannot perform a good work, unless it be his work; it is his mercy that first goes before us, and gives us grace, likeas it is the same mercy which follows after us, and keeps us in the same grace."‡ So then, and here comes the conclusion, which it is most important, and I may add, most consoling for us to lay to heart. "It is not good for us to trust in our merits, in our virtues, or our righteousness: but only in God's free pardon, as given us through faith in Jesus Christ."§

And here, having explained the most remarkable tenets of Wickliff upon these great subjects, the Scripture, Traditions, the Church, Justification, and Merits, it will be best to omit for the present any considerations upon

* "Infantes peccant in matris utero." In Expos. Decal. p. 77, MS. in Brit. Mus. Cotton MS. Titus, DXIX.

† Comment. on Psalm. p. 109.

‡ Ibid. p. 79.

§ Ibid. p. 374.

the Pope, or the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as being points upon which, at the time of his first lectures in the University, his mind was not distinctly made up, and to proceed with the story of his life.

In the year 1374, we find that he had risen into so high estimation with his sovereign, Edward the Third, as to be sent, along with some other noble and reverend knights and prelates, on an embassy to Pope Gregory the Eleventh, the nephew of Pope Clement the Sixth, and, like him, an ambitious and violent assertor of the prerogatives of the chair of St Peter.* Indeed, the disputes between the King of England and the Pope had now come to such a head, and the impudent usurpations of these men, upon the temporal authority of the monarch, and his unalienable rights in the distribution of church benefices, had grown so numerous, that it was evident some device must be fallen upon to put an end to this evil. The most wealthy English benefices were, by the mere fiat of the Pope, be-

* Biogr. Brittan. p. 2459. Art. Wickliff. Rymer's Fœdera, vol. VII. p. 41.

stowed indiscriminately upon Italians, Frenchmen, and other aliens,* the richest mitres in England placed on the heads of mere children, whose parents having saluted the palm of his

* A curious instance of this occurs in Pegge's Life of Grosteste, p. 195.—"In January 1253, Innocent ordered his nephew, an Italian youth, to be invested with a canonry of Lincoln. His name was Frederic de Levania, and by provision, for this was the term, he was to be accommodated with a prebend in that church, and the Pope had written to Bishop Grosteste, to give him the first that should fall, declaring, that any other disposal of such prebend should be null and void, and excommunicating all those who should obstruct or oppose him in that measure; notwithstanding any usages or statutes to the contrary, strengthened by oaths, or confirmations of the apostolic see, or by any other confirmation. This was called the clause, 'Non obstante.' Bishop Grosteste courageously resisted this nomination, and in a very spirited letter represented to the Pope, that it was his duty not to obey a mandate which would go to rob Christian souls of their instruction, 'wherefore,' says he, 'I, for my part, Filialiter, et obedienter, non obedio.' This letter threw his Holiness into a towering passion. 'Who,' cried he, 'is this old dotard—deaf—and a fool, too, that presumes to judge of my actions? By Peter and Paul, if the goodness of my heart did not restrain me, I should so chastise him, as to make him an example and a spectacle to all the world! Is not the King of England my vassal and my slave?' He then excommunicated the bishop, and named a successor to his see. Upon which Grosteste appealed from the Pope to the tribunal of Christ, and troubling himself no more regarding it, the matter dropt."

Holiness with a sufficient offering of ducats, procured their sons to be made shepherds of a flock which had never seen their face. In their stead some ignorant priest, for a miserable salary, was commissioned to feed his parishioners, not with the word of truth, communicated in their own native tongue, but with Latin homilies and monkish fables; and, in the meantime, ample care was taken that the factors of these alien clergy, and boy bishops, regularly transmitted the revenues of their benefices to Rome, whither whole waggon-loads of English gold went to the maintenance of Italian villianies. Can it be wondered at, that against this monstrous abuse, even in those days when liberty was little recked of, the wisdom of our English Parliament rose in open revolt, making grievous complaints to the King, representing, that "manifold inconveniencies ensued from such a state of things, as the decay of hospitality, the transporting of the treasure of the realm, to the maintenance of the King's mortal enemies,* the discovering of the secrets of

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 32.

the kingdom, and the utter discouragement, disabling and impoverishing of scholars, the natives of the land."* Nay, in the same indignant temper, they complained to the Pope himself, "that by his reservations, provisions, and collations, a great number of souls were in peril, by their pastors having little or no understanding at all of our language,† and of the conditions and customs of these of whom they have the government and cure; that the service of God was neglected, the alms and devotion of all men diminished, the hospitals brought to decay, the churches, with their appurtenances, ruined and dilapidated."

* In the time of Henry the Third, this evil had reached an enormous and intolerable height. We learn from Matthew Paris, that in 1244, these foreign ecclesiastics were possessed of 10,000 marks per annum, more than equal to the revenue of the crown. This went on increasing, for Bishop Grosteste, on strict inquiry, found, in 1252, that the rents of the stranger clerks amounted to 70,000 marks, the King's income not being a third part of that sum.—Mat. Paris, p. 859; also, p. 658, 657.

† In benefices filled by Italians—"Nec jura, nec pauperum sustentatio, nec divini verbi prædicatio, nec ecclesiarum utilis ornatus, nec animarum cura, nec in Ecclesiis divina fiunt obsequia prout decet, et moris est patriæ, sed in ædificiis suis parietes cum tectis corruunt, et penitus lacerantur." —*Life of Grosteste*, p. 185.

Pope Gregory, who held his court at Avignon, at this time the centre of all vice and enormity, was in no way moved by these complaints, but rather esteemed it as a reason for exerting his prerogatives more violently, and saying, with wicked Jeroboam, "My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: My father chastised you with whips, but I shall chastise you with scorpions," he continued actively to dispose of the church preferments of England, so that the papal usurpations were daily becoming more intolerable than before. To remedy this, Edward the Third had already, in 1373, dispatched an embassy to Gregory,* requesting, that for the

* Barnes' History of Edward III. p. 864. See Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 32.

"During the disputes between Gregory the Ninth and the Emperor, that Pontiff, in order to induce many of his adherents who had deserted his party, to support him against his enemy, did not hesitate to promise them all the vacant benefices of England—a most audacious procedure—in pursuance of which he dispatched his bulls to the Bishops of Canterbury, Lincoln, and Salisbury, ordering them immediately to provide 300 Romans with the first vacant benefices, prohibiting the three prelates from collating any benefices till the Romans were served. When Mumelinus, one of the clerks of Otho, the legate, came into England, he brought 24 Romans with him, who were all to be preferred here. This same Otho,

future he would forbear meddling with the reservations of benefices, that the clergy of England might freely enjoy their election to Episcopal dignities; and that, according to ancient custom, it should be judged sufficient for them to be confirmed by their metropolitans."

But, for what reason we know not, this attempt towards a redress of these grievances came to nothing, and the ambassadors returned to England without obtaining any satisfactory answer from the Pope.

Next year, the King sent commissioners through the whole realm, to make an exact estimate of all the ecclesiastical benefices and dignities which were then in the hands of Frenchmen, Italians, or other aliens;* and the excessive number which appeared upon the rolls created so much alarm, that he immediately resolved to dispatch another embassy to the Pope; and in order that the affair might be managed with due integrity and firmness, and that the dread of the Papal censure, or

as Matthew Paris tells us, had, when he was in England, disposed of above 300 prebends, rectories, and other benefices."—PEGGE'S *Life of Grosteste*, p. 92.

FOX'S Acts and Monuments, p. 429, 430.

the over-respect and awe for the triple crown, might not overcome the conscientious assertion of the liberties of the church, and the kingdom of England, he nominated John Wickliff one of these ambassadors, to whose prudence and courage had the whole negotiation been committed, there is little doubt that the issue would have been completely satisfactory.* But it so happened, that there were conjoined with Wickliff in this embassy, two of the clergy, John Gilbert, Bishop of Bangor, and Guter, the Dean of Schew, who were more intent upon their own advancement than solicitous for the welfare of their country; and they politicly conceiving that they would obtain the prelatical dignities which they aimed at, more speedily by the influence of the court of Rome, than by due and regular elections, so managed matters, that the most material question of all, the election to episcopal dignities by the chapters, was waived, and nothing mentioned regarding it. As to the other heads of nego-

* Rymer's Federa, vol. VII. p. 41. Wickliff's brother ambassadors were John, Bishop of Bangor, John Guter, Simon de Multon, William de Barton, Robert Bealknap, and John de Henyngton.

tiation, after two years intrigue and parley at Bruges, between the English envoys and the Papal nuncios, the Bishop of Pampeluna, the Bishop of Senigaglia, and the Provost of the church of Valenza, a treaty was concluded, declaring that, for the future, the Pope should desist from making use of reservations of benefices, and that the King should no more confer benefices by his writ, "*quare impedit.*" But this treaty, like the last, was made only to be broken;* and the Pope, who had no intention of parting so easily with what he conceived one of the richest jewels in his crown, but who wished merely by fair words to amuse and get rid of the ambassadors for the present, continued to pursue the same system as before, making reservations of dignities elective, contrary to the express stipulations of the treaty of Bruges. Against this abuse the Parliament of England again held up their hands, and brought in a famous bill, which ascribed to the Papal usurpations† all the famine, poverty, ignorance, and wretchedness of the land. They declared, in this noted remonstrance, "That the

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 34.

† Cotton's Abridgement, p. 128.

tax paid to the Pope of Rome for ecclesiastical dignities, doth amount to five-fold as much as the tax of all the profits which appertain to the King by the year, of this whole realm; and for some one bishoprick, or other dignity, the Pope, by way of translation, or death, hath three, four, or five several taxes. They complained, that the brokers of that sinful city for money promote many caitiffs, being altogether unlearned and unworthy, to a thousand marks living yearly; whereby learning decayeth; that aliens, enemies to this land, who never saw, or care to see, their parishioners, have those livings, whereby they despise God's service, and convey away the treasure of the realm, and are worse than Jews or Saracens. They represented how strongly such base dealing was against the law of truth and of the Gospel, seeing that it was the law of the church, that such livings should be bestowed for charity only, without paying or praying; and that livings given of devotion should be bestowed of hospitality; observing also, that God hath given his sheep to the Pope to be pastured, and not shorn or shaven; that lay patrons, perceiving this simony and covetous-

ness of the Pope, learn to sell their benefices to beasts, as Christ was sold to the Jews; that the richest prince in Christendom hath not the fourth part so great a sum of treasure as the Pope contrives to get out of this realm most sinfully. They stated, that the Pope's collector kept a house in London, with clerks and officers thereunto belonging, as if it were one of the King's solemn courts, transporting yearly to the Pope, twenty thousand marks, and most commonly more. That cardinals and other aliens remaining at the court of Rome have divers of the best dignities in England, one cardinal being Dean of York,* another of Salisbury, another of Lincoln, another Archdeacon of Canterbury, another Archdeacon of Durham, another Archdeacon of Suffolk, another Archdeacon of York, another Prebendary of Thane and Bessington, another Prebendary of York, and that these have yearly sent over to them twenty thousand marks, over and above that which English brokers lying here have." They added to these grievances, "That the Pope, to ransom Frenchmen, the King's enemies, who defend Lom-

* Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. I. p. 561.

bardy for him, doth always at his pleasure levy a subsidy of the whole clergy of England: That the Pope, for more gain, maketh sundry translations of all the bishopricks and other dignities within the realm: That the Pope's collector hath this year taken to his use the first fruits of all benefices; That it would, therefore, be good to renew all the statutes against provisions from Rome, since the Pope reserveth all the benefices in the world for his own proper gift, and hath within the year created twelve new cardinals, so that there are now thirty, all of whom, excepting two or three, are the King's enemies. They insinuated, that the Pope, in time, will give the temporal manors or dignities to the King's enemies, since he daily usurpeth upon the realm and the King's regality, and hath encroached upon the free elections of all houses and corporations in religion, whose heads looked formerly to the King for their nomination; they deprecated the practice by which, in all legations from the Pope whatsoever, the English are made to bear the charge of the legates, and all for the goodness of the English money, which, were it as plenty as it once was in the

realm, the Pope's collector, and the cardinal proctors, would soon convey it away out of the land; and to remedy such an evil, they concluded this admirably spirited remonstrance, by advising his Majesty that no such collector or proctors do remain in England upon pain of life and limb; and that, on the like pain, no Englishman become any such collector or proctor, or remain at the court of Rome."*

But although the embassy to Bruges came to nothing, and the treaty there concluded was not acted upon by the Pope, yet the sojourning which Wickliff had in that city, for nearly two years, was productive of much good to the cause of truth. His meeting the Papal envoys face to face, and the nearer approach to the gross corruptions and vices of the court of Rome, which he obtained by the handling and debating of the different heads of the treaty, opened his eyes more completely to the dreadful system of oppression and delusion, under which the world had so long and hopelessly groaned.

Before this, in the solitariness of his college

* Cotton's Abridgement of the Statutes, p. 128.

life, and guided only by his Bible, and the light of his own clear and strong intellect, he had speculated and reasoned upon the privileges so proudly claimed by the persons who for many centuries had termed themselves the vicegerents of Christ; he had inclined to dispute their authority, and had heard much of their profligate and sinful lives. But now he was for a season residing within the very tabernacles of sin; he was in the midst of a thick darkness, which, like that brought upon Egypt by Moses, could be handled; he felt and touched the wickedness of which he had only dreamt before; he observed the effects of the system of Romish superstition in destroying the faith and purity of the Gospel, in paralysing the conscience, depraving the heart, rendering the intellect dead and sluggish in her searches after truth, chaining up in those fetters of error and custom, which are stronger than fetters of iron, the free-born reason of man, and giving for money a chartered indulgence to the most horrid sins and licentiousness. He came home, therefore, in a paroxysm of holy rage and indignation, and all his best principles and feelings, his religion, his love for his coun-

try, his generous shame for the time already lost, his indignation at being baffled in his negotiations by the servile and selfish tools of the Papacy, impelled him to re-enter the lists, and, armed in the panoply of truth, to run another course with the Goliah of the Tower of St Angelo. And the temper in which we see he found the Parliament of England, their eyes being now completely opened to the encroachments of Rome, encouraged him to undertake the contest. On his return, accordingly, to his divinity lectures, he began to exclaim loudly against the ambition, tyranny, and wickedness of the Pope.* He proclaimed him to be that Antichrist foretold in Scripture; and styling him the proud worldly priest of Rome, the most cursed of clippers and purse-carvers, he let loose against

* Long before this, in 1253, Bishop Grosteste had thus spoken of the Pope to his private physician, John de St Giles:—"I conclude, that both the Pope, unless he amends his error, and the friars, except they will endeavour to restrain him, must be deservedly subject to everlasting death. And even the decretal says, that upon this head, namely, for heresy, the Pope both may, and ought to be, accused and condemned."—MATHEW PARIS, p. 874. See also the dying address of this excellent prelate to his chaplains in Pegge's Life of Grosteste, p. 205.

him that spirit of strong eloquence and severe invective which he possessed in an uncommon degree, and turned his improved experience into a weapon of most potent effect against the gross superstitions of Popery. In his writings, too, he was not idle; for in one of his treatises, entitled "The Great Sentence of the Curse Expounded," he thus anatomizes the iniquities of the Pope and his collectors.* "They draw out of our land poor men's lifelihood, to the extent of many thousand marks by the year of the King's money, under pretence that they are spent on sacraments and spiritual things, which amounts to the sin of heresy and symony; and, moreover, they cause all Christendom to maintain this heresy. And certainly," he continues, "though our realme had a huge hill of gold, and never any man took therefrom, but only this proud worldly priest's collector, by process of time this hill would be spended; for he is ever taking money

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 37. The passage is taken from the work entitled "The Great Sentence of the Curse Expounded." It is a MS. in the library of C. C. College, Cambridge.—BABER'S *Memoirs of Wickliff*, p. 50.

out of our land, and sending nothing again in return, but God's curse against his symony."*

As to that power which was claimed by the Pope and the prelates, for the punishment of crimes against the laws, to the exclusion of the just temporal jurisdiction of the King and his barons, Wickliff is very indignant. "They," says he, (meaning the Pope and his supporters,) "cry aloud, and write in their laws, That the King hath no jurisdiction nor power over the persons or goods of Holy Church. And when the King and the secular lords, perceiving that clerks waste their ancestors' alms in pomp and pride, gluttony, and other vanities, wish to take again the superfluity of temporal goods, and to help the land, and themselves, and their tenants, these worldly clerks bawl loudly, that they ought to be cursed for intermitting with the goods of Holy Church, as if secular lords and the commons were no part of Holy Church."†

In addition to all this, he very boldly and

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 37.

† From the Great Sentence of Curse Expounded, c. 11. c. 20. MS.

bitterly exposed the corruptions which clung to all sorts and conditions of people in England, and, among the rest, to the prelates of the land,—speaking thus of their pride and covetousness:*—"Prelates who come in the place of the apostles, and who affirm that they follow Christ in his rule of life, ought to be the most meek of all men, the most diligent and busy in studying and teaching of Holy Writ, and in holding out an example of all good manner of life, both to Christian men and to brethren. But they are so choaked with the tallow of worldly goods, and the occupations about them, that they have no leisure to preach the Gospel, or to warn the people of the deceits of the devil. Prelates, in like manner, make themselves most unable to keep the gospel of Christ, by their great business about the rotten goods, the pomp, and the grandeur of this world, so that they have become the most busy of all men in the world, in the heaping up of worldly riches, both by purchase and by false plea. Oh, Lord!

* Of Prelates, MS. in C. C. College, Cambridge.

what token of meekness or of forsaking is this! Behold this prelate, this abbot, or prior, whom we are bound to believe dead to the world, if we credit his own hypocritical lips,—behold him coming sweeping along the road with fourscore horse at his heels, in harness of gold and silver, with multitudes of squires and lewd serving-men around him, who are impiously swaggering and swearing all manner of horrid oaths, as by the heart, and bones, and nails of Christ.—It is these same prelates," he continues, " that deceive poor men as to their alms, and, by false promises of pardon, make men give their lifelihood to cathedral churches, that have no need, and that teach poor men to hope better for God's mercy, in proportion as they give their goods in alms to rich houses; and persuade rich men to endow with their wealth the fat and corrupted clerks, rather than to distribute it to those of their poor neighbours, who are bedrid, feeble, crooked, blind, and have nothing of their own."*

* Of Prelates, MS. c. 1. The passages in the original old English of Wickliff, which, for the sake of perspicuity, has been a little altered, will be found quoted from the original MS. in Lewis, p. 40.

From the prelates, Wickliff, in his lectures and writings, descended to the case of the curates, whom he describes as miserably ignorant. "There were many," he tells us, "that knew not the ten commandments; that could not read or repeat a verse of their Psalter.—Nay, it is notorious," he continues, "that too many, even of the prelates, were sinners, in being ignorant of the law of God; and that the friars supplied for the bishops the office of preaching, which they did in so false and sophistical a manner, that the church was deceived instead of being edified."* Again, in his Treatise of Prelates, he reproaches these slothful dignitaries, classing them together with the curates, "because they preach not Christ's gospel in word and deed, by which preaching alone, Christian men will be induced to lead a holy life in charity;" and he observes, "that although they have assumed the charge and office of leading the people through perilous ways and enemies, by the true preaching of the gospel, and the example of their own holy life, yet through their dumbness and avidity about

* Trialogus, fol. 66. 72. Great Sentence of Curse Expounded, MS. c. 3. 16.

the world's riches, they suffer Christian souls to be strangled with the wolves of hell; and to fill up the measure of their iniquity, if any poor priest dares freely to preach Christ's gospel, and labours to deliver Christian souls out of the hands of the fiend, these prelates pursue him and excommunicate him." And he goes on to complain, "That when the prelate or curate is charged of God, upon pain of his own damnation, to teach the gospel and commandments of God to all his subjects, and when it happens that he cannot do so, either from worldly occupations, or will not do so from idleness or negligence, then he adds to his crime, by hindering others from freely preaching, and essaying to save men's souls; and in addition to this, they send some ignorant pretenders to divine knowledge, who fill the people with all manner of lies, fables, and chronicles, who rob the poor men of the land by cunning tales and begging, and for fear of losing their friendship and favour, forbear to warn them of their great sins and adulteries."*

* Of Prelates, MS. c. 9. 10.

It would seem that the Romish clergy, being shamed and heart-stricken with these true and bold reproaches of Wickliff, took refuge, and defended themselves under an assertion that "praying and giving one's self up to holy prayers, helpeth more a Christian man, and is altogether better than preaching." And with this veil, even in our own days, namely, the opinion that the contemplative life is to be preferred to the life of active piety, many blind their eyes. But this is just one of those devices which our great enemy knows well how to use for our delusion. It is one of those robes of light stolen by that arch-deceiver from the angel's wardrobe in which he cases himself, and sometimes thus contrives to be taken for one of the company of heaven. To lay down upon heaven's altar an offering of barren feelings of quiet good will, and to imagine that they will be received in the place of active charities, and deeds of practical usefulness, in dividing and distributing the food of life to our perishing brethren, is an insult to the spirit of that religion which says, "up and be doing," to every soldier that fights un-

der its banner. So at least thought Wickliff, for thus he replies to this argument.

"Men may say boldly that true preaching is better than praying by mouth; yea, though it come of heart and clean devotion, and it edifieth more the people, and therefore Christ specially commanded the apostles and disciples to preach the gospel, and not to close them in cloisters, nor churches, nor stalls, to pray thus. And therefore Isaiah saith, 'Woe is me, for I was still.' And Paul saith, 'Woe is to me, if I preach not the gospel.' And God to the prophet, 'If I show not to the sinful his sins, he shall be damned therefore.'—Thus preaching is algates best; nevertheless, devout prayer of good men is good in certain time; but it is against charity for priests to pray evermore, and to give no time to preach; since Christ chargeth priests more for to preach the gospel, than to say mass or matins."* After which, he concludes by breaking out into this reflection:—

* "How Anti-Christ feren true Priests fro Preaching," MS. Also written in Latin, under the title "*Impedimenta Evangelizantium.*" In English it is preserved in C. C. Coll. Cambridge.—Mr Baber's *Memoirs of Wickliff*, p. 41.

"Lord! what charity is it to a cunning man to choose his own contemplation in rest, and to suffer other men to go to hell for breaking of God's hests, when he may lightly, and with little trouble, teach them, and get more thank of God in little teaching, than by long time spent in such prayers. Therefore, it is the duty of priests to study Holy Writ, to keep and practise it in their own life, and to teach it to other men truly and freely. And that is best and most charity; not omitting, at certain times, to pray devoutly, and have sorrow for their sins and other men's. And if they do this, they will, in comparison with other saints, be as the firmament over the little stars. God bring us all to that glorious bliss, for his endless mercy!" *

And now Wickliff's opinions spread rapidly amongst all classes of persons; and so seasoned were the doctrines he delivered with truth and good sense, that they suited all palates alike. The University of Oxford, where he gave his lectures, warmly admired him, and counted themselves fortunate in having so

* How Anti-Christ feren true Priests fro Preaching, MS.

learned a divine amongst their professors; and although as a body they never did espouse his sentiments, yet multitudes of their scholars, and even of their grave and old doctors, declared themselves of the same creed as Wickliff, and in their turn, by their conversation, and instructions, and example, assisted the spreading of the new doctrines. Many of the nobility also, and more still of the smaller barons and gentlemen, listened to his lectures and received his instruction with great readiness and sincerity; * so that it was no unusual thing in the class where he taught, to see as many steel caps as polled crowns or black bonnets. But, what was still more important, by and by, the report of these things reached into the country, and the hinds and labourers began to hear that a wonderful man was preaching and lecturing at Oxford in their own tongue; so that they too were tempted to come and listen; and if they once came, such was the charm of his plain and familiar eloquence,

* Soon after the death of their master, the Wickliffites, in the papers which they put up on the church doors, and other public places, boasted that they were a body of a hundred thousand at the least.—Lewis's *Life of Pecock*, p. 7.

that they were sure to return, and to bring their neighbours with them. In this manner, the doors and windows of the lecture-hall began to be beset by the populace; and therefore, although by the want of education, and of printing, it was impossible for Wickliff to disseminate his opinions very rapidly; yet here, by the flocking of the people from the country, was a kind of substitute provided for this want, and what had never yet been done by the lazy clergy of the Romish church, was now accomplished, "the gospel was preached to the poor."

All this greatly enraged those who termed themselves the orthodox party; and from the lower expressions of dissatisfaction, they proceeded to interrupt the sermons of Wickliff by riot, and to endeavour to disperse his congregations by tumult and blows. To defend, therefore, the person of the preacher, whom they so greatly respected, the barons and gentlemen would often come to the lecture with their banner displayed, and a good possè of their armed followers at their backs; * and as

* "Isti (the knights) erant hujus sectæ promotores strenuissimi, qui militari cingulo ambiebant ne a rectè credentibus

these sat leaning on their spears, or when pleased by something said by the preacher, would strike their swords on the ground, a stranger might have mistaken them for a hostile leaguer, rather than an assembly of students met together to hear the gospel expounded.

It was about this time, that is, not long after his return from his embassy to the Pope, that the King bestowed on Wickliff the rectory of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln,*—a testimony of respect from his sovereign, which excited much envy against him in the breasts of those who looked upon him as an audacious heretic. Yet, it is probable, that this partiality shown by the King, al-

aliquid opprobrii aut damni propter eorum profanam doctrinam sortirentur."—*Knighton de Event. Angliæ.*

" Nam assistere solent sic ineptè prædicantes gladio et pelta stipati ad eorum defensionem ne quis contra eos aut eorum doctrinam, blasphemam, aliquid temptare vel contradicere quandoque auderet."—*Knighton apud Twysden*, vol. II. p. 2662.

* Lewis, p. 44. Wickliff also was presented to the prebendary of Aust, in the diocese of Worcester, 58 Edw. III., 7 April. Magister Joannes Wycliff clericus habet literas regias de presentatione ad Ecclesiam de Lutterworth.—*Tanner, Biblioth.* p. 767.

though it inflamed the clergy, caused some of of the highest of the nobility to take his part, for the example of a king is potent in provoking imitation; and there are always around a throne a set of supple courtiers, who not only cut their doublets after the exact fashion of royalty, but shape their minds and fancies to a precise imitation of the same model. And I fear it was from a lower motive of this kind, that John of Gaunt, the King's son, and Henry Piercy, the Earl Marshal of England, began now to be named as the protectors of the new doctrines, for, after the King's death, their zeal waxed cold. Be this as it may, Wickliff boldly persevered in the dissemination of his new opinions, performing, with exemplary and conscientious activity, the duty of a parish priest, preaching not only on the Sundays, but on the various festivals of the church; as appears from his numerous sermons yet remaining in manuscript. Nor did he intermit his lectures in the University; and from the great resort made to them, the leaven of his doctrines, carried by his hearers and disciples from one part to another, proceeded to ferment through the whole country. Men began to

reason, to appeal to the Bible, to examine and compare texts, to handle and debate on subjects of Catholic belief, and points of superstitious practice, which before they had regarded as mysteries too high for them. They had long looked with horror on the profligate lives of their spiritual pastors, but till now it was a disgust which could lead to no attempt to better their condition, for they had no deliverer to guide and instruct them. They knew that, from the impure hands which distributed to them, under the forms of masses, homilies, and placebos, what was falsely called the bread of life, nothing but lies could come; and what was more heart-rending, they knew that these very hands held the Book of Life, but that they would not communicate it, and that if they did, it was in a language which they could not understand. We must think of all this, and of much more, which I cannot now speak of; we must enter into the hopeless and heart-sick feelings of the millions of this poor country of England, who were shut up in the dungeons of Romish idolatry, to estimate the joy which rushed in upon their minds when Wickliff appeared, and opened their prison

doors, and let in upon them the glorious light and freedom of the gospel.

All this, however, could not happen without an alarm being sounded through the kingdom, which soon reached the ears of the church of Rome; and now, as was to be looked for, began this good man's persecutions. The Pope was written to, and nineteen heretical articles,* alleged to be maintained by Wickliff, and extracted from his public lectures and sermons, were transmitted to Rome, for the consideration of his Holiness and the cardinals. Of these articles, the most prominent were the following:—1st, It was complained that Wickliff taught, "That there was no power in man to ordain that Peter and his successors should have political dominion over the world, and that charters of human invention, concerning a perpetual inheritance hereafter, are impossible." It is well known that the Popes claimed a right of superiority over the princes of this world, and a power which they said was from God, of depriving kings of their tempo-

* These will be found printed by Lewis, in the collection of Papers and Records printed at the end of his Life of Wickliff.

ral dominions when they thought fit, and these tenets of Wickliff were directed against such unfounded usurpations. In the next place, he was accused of teaching, that, "When the church is in a reprobate and delinquent state, it is not only lawful for temporal princes, but their bounden duty, under the penalty of damnation, to deprive it of its possessions, which serve only to pamper it in its iniquities." A most important doctrine, by which Wickliff struck at the root of that ecclesiastical liberty, or exemption of the persons and goods of the clergy, and of the church, from the power of the laws, which was claimed by the Pope for himself and his children.

The next complaint against Wickliff, and the articles by which this complaint was supported, were of still higher interest, and show with what a penetrating judgement, and determined courage, he had set his face against the despotism of the court of Rome. It related to what is commonly called the power of the keys, or that authority by which the Pope maintains, that, as Vicar of Christ, he enjoyed the power of retaining, or remitting the sins of any individual, absolutely and without any

reference to the fact, whether this person was a believer in Christ, and a faithful follower of the precepts of the gospel, or an adversary of the faith. Against this horrid and impious doctrine, Wickliff entered his protest. He maintained, that such authority in the Pope was conditional; admitting, in part, the power of absolution, but adding, that such remission was effectual only to those who endeavoured sincerely to conform themselves to the law of Christ; and that such a retention of the sins of any individual was only condemnatory against those who were adversaries of that law. But his opinions will be best seen by the articles, which on this subject were drawn up against him. He taught, it was said, "That it is impossible that the vicar of Christ should purely by his bulls, or by them, backed by the will and consent of himself, and his college of cardinals, qualify or disqualify any one: that it is not possible for a man to be excommunicated, unless he be first and principally excommunicated by himself, meaning, by his own wickedness, or want of faith: that cursing or excommunication does not bind simply; but only so far as it is denounced against an ad-

versary of the law of Christ: that our Saviour has given to his disciples no example of a power to excommunicate subjects, solely because they deny them their temporal things; but so far from it, has given them an example to the contrary; and that the same disciples have no power by censures, or any such spiritual denunciations, to exact their temporal goods from their flock." The two last articles objected against Wickliff, were taken from the doctrines which he had maintained on the subject of papal indulgences, and the Pope's reserving to himself the giving of absolution in some special cases, and on the question of the power of subjects to correct and call to account their spiritual pastors and masters.

He maintained, it was said, "That this ought to be universally believed, that every priest, rightly ordained, has a power of administering every one of the sacraments, and, by consequence, of absolving every contrite person from any sin." And also, "That an ecclesiastick, yea, even the Pope of Rome, may lawfully be corrected by subjects, and even the laity, and may also be accused or impeached by them."

Such articles being drawn up, and sent to Pope Gregory the Eleventh, that spiritual despot began to bestir himself mightily, and instantly directed in one day four bulls and one epistle, to the realm of England. The three first bulls* were addressed to Simon Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, (a little time after this miserably murdered by Wat Tyler and his rabble,) and to William Courtney, Bishop of London. The epistle was written to no less a personage than King Edward himself; and the fourth and last bull was sent to the University of Oxford, Wickliff's kind and fostering mother, who coldly received the hot-headed denunciations of the Pope.

The terms in which Gregory addresses himself to the prelates and the King, are worthy of notice, as showing that awful despotism with which these tyrants lorded it over the free intellect of man. "It is now plain," says he, "that, in that very kingdom which used to produce men endued with a right knowledge of the Scriptures, grave, devout, and champions of the orthodox faith, those

* The three bulls will be found in Lewis's Appendix, No. 13, 14, 15; and the epistle in the same, No. 16.

whose office it is to be watchmen, are slothfully negligent, insomuch, that the latent motions and open attempts of the enemies are perceived at Rome, situated at a great distance, before they are opposed in England. He had heard," he continues, " with a great deal of concern, by the information of several very worthy to be credited, that John Wickliff, Rector of Lutterworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, and professor of divinity, he wished he was not a master of errors, had rashly proceeded to that detestable degree of madness, as not to be afraid to assert, dogmatise, and publickly to preach, such propositions as are erroneous and false, contrary to the faith, and threatening to subvert the estate of the whole church * *. For this reason, he commands them privately to inform themselves, whether or no Wickliff did teach such conclusions as were in the schedule he had sent them inclosed in his bull; and if they found that they did so, to cause him to be apprehended by his authority, and laid in gaol; to endeavour also to get his confession concerning the said propositions and conclusions; and that they should make it their business to transmit to him, by

a faithful messenger, this confession, along with whatever else the said Wickliff shall say or write by way of induction or proof of the same propositions, sealed with their own seals, and disclosed to no person; and he concludes with an injunction that they should take care to keep the said John in sure custody, until they received further commands from him in this matter."

In the second bull, in the event of Wickliff not being apprehended, these two bishops are directed to summon him to appear before the Pope at Rome, within three months; and in the third, the same prelates have it in charge to provide against the pestilence of heresy reaching the court or the throne, by "taking care that King Edward, his sons and kindred, the Princess of Aquitain and Wales, and others of the English nobility and King's counsellors, be instructed by Sudbury and Courtney, and other doctors skilled in Sacred Writ, and not defiled with these errors, but sincere and fervent in the faith; so that they be fully convinced that Wickliff's conclusions are not only erroneous with respect to the faith, but

that they infer an utter destruction of all polity or government."

I shall not delay my reader by translating the letter which the same Pope addressed to the King, or the bull of mingled threats and compliments, with which he endeavoured to induce the University to seize and give up Wickliff into the hands of the Bishops of Canterbury and London. With regard to the first, King Edward was dead before it reached England; and as for the second, so highly did Oxford respect the opinions of Wickliff, that it became a matter of debate whether the University should not wholly reject the bull, although brought to them by the Pope's nuncio in person.*

It happened very providentially for the safety of Wickliff, and consequently for the cause of truth, that at the time when these orders from Rome reached England, the tide of parliamentary opinion was running very strongly against the usurpations and exactions of the papal court. It had been debated in Richard the Second's first parliament, which met at

* Lewis, p. 53. Walsingham's Hist. p. 201.

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Westminster on the 13th of October 1377, "Whether the kingdom of England, on an imminent necessity of its own defence, may not lawfully detain the treasure of the kingdom, so that it be not carried out of the land; although the Lord Pope requires, upon pain of censures, that it be carried out." This question, then considered one of great difficulty and delicacy, was, by the King and parliament, referred to Wickliff, who answered, that such retention of the treasure of the realm, was undoubtedly lawful, and engaged to show the soundness of this opinion by the principles laid down in the gospel.*

To return now to the bishops and their proceedings, on receiving the bulls which reached England in November 1377, they began to consider how they could best get hold of Wickliff. But he, informed, as is likely by the heads of the University, that he was become the object of papal denunciation, and that the emissaries of the bishops were looking out to ap-

* Fox's Acts and Monuments, vol. I. p. 584. Cotton's Abridgement, p. 160, 161. An excellent account of the resistance of the English Parliament against the Pops, will be found in Rapin, vol. I. p. 478.

prehend him, fled for protection to John of Gaunt, who, before this time, had known his worth, and admired his learning and talents. With this prince, the apparitors or bailiffs of the bishops found him, and immediately cited him to appear before the delegates of the Pope, at the Cathedral of St Paul's, to which he promptly agreed.*

And now the story of Wickliff's being summoned to answer for his faith before the Bishops of London and Canterbury, was bruited through the country, and men's minds were notably agitated; so that on the day appointed for his appearance, an immense concourse of persons assembled about the Church of St Paul's. His enemies flocked to see and rejoice at his debasement; his friends, with pious haste, ran to pity and support him; and as is wont on all such occasions, multitudes, who were neither the one nor the other, crowded in to babble and wonder. In the midst of this universal resort, and when this huge living

* Milner, in his Church History, vol. IV. p. 114, tells the story as if Wickliff, *by the advice* of John of Gaunt, obeyed the citation. I see no authority anywhere for this fact, and Milner gives none.

mass was moving to and fro, like the waves of the sea, Wickliff appeared, attended by John of Gaunt, and Henry Percy, Earl Marshal of England ;* but so impenetrable were the mob assembled within and without the church, that neither the two lords, nor Wickliff, could make their way through them. Upon this, Percy proceeded to use his authority as marshal, and to disperse the crowd ; and here it ought to be remarked, that the Londoners were not willing to admit that the Lord Marshal's jurisdiction extended over their city ; so as to take cognizance of any riot, or make any arrests within the same ;† but insisted that such authority belonged alone to their Lord Mayor. When Percy, therefore, attempted to control

* Fox, in his Acts and Monuments, p. 423, says, that he was also accompanied by four bachelors of divinity, selected out of the Orders of Friars. Of these orders, Wickliff had shown himself so bitter an enemy, that this is very unlikely: But the preachers who went about the country spreading Wickliff's opinions in their sermons, were clothed in russet, and went barefoot (Fox, p. 426). This dress is similar to that of the friars mendicant ; and it is not unlikely, that, on this memorable day, when cited to attend at St Paul's, some of his preachers accompanied him, and were mistaken for friars.

† Fox's Acts and Monuments, p. 427.

the people, they violently resisted; and this causing a great commotion, Courtney, Bishop of London, came forward, and incensed to see him whom he deemed an audacious heretic, between the two most powerful nobles in England, cried out to the marshal, that "he would have stopt him from coming there, had he known what mastery he kept in the church." Then John of Gaunt, who was a very noble-looking personage, but somewhat choleric, looked the bishop full in the face, and told him, "he would keep such mastery there, though he should say nay." And thus through much struggling and bandying, both of words and blows, they and the accused at last reached the chapel of Our Lady, where the archbishop and bishop were seated, surrounded by other prelates and church dignitaries, with many dukes and barons, who came to hear the trial. And here began another altercation; for when Wickliff, with all due reverence, stood up before the commissioners to hear his accusation, the Earl Marshal, somewhat unseasonably interrupting the proceedings, and probably altogether against the wish of the Reformer himself, bade him not stand, but sit down; add-

ing, that he had many things to answer to, and therefore needed a soft seat, during so tedious an attendance. "That he shall not do," cried Courtney; "for it ill becomes one cited to appear before his ordinary the Lord Pope, to sit on such an occasion." This again drew another sharp reply from Percy; when the Duke of Lancaster, striking in, took the Earl Marshal's part; and at length, quite losing all command of himself, observed, that the Earl Marshal's motion was but reasonable. "And as for you, lord bishop," said he, turning to Courtney, "who begin to grow so proud and arrogant, it seems you deem too much upon your parents and high descent (in truth Courtney was, by the female line, a lineal descendant of Edward the First); but trust me, I'll not leave you till I bring down, not only your pride, but that of all the prelacy of England."—"I look not," retorted Courtney, "to my family, or to man's power; my help is in God, from whom I pray for boldness to proclaim the truth." An excellent speech, had it at all accorded with the actions of the prelate, who at this moment was labouring to extin-

guish the first ray of gospel truth which for a thousand years had dawned in England.

But to return. What precise reply was made to this last observation, appears not, but that the contest grew exceeding bitter, is to be presumed; for it caused John of Gaunt to say softly in the ear of one who stood by, "That he would pluck the bishop by the hair of the head, out of church, sooner than take such words at his hands." These words again were not so lowly whispered but that they reached the Londoners, who stood hard by. And now a terrible hubbub arose; for the mob, no doubt stirred up by the priests who stood amongst them, were enraged to see their bishop thus treated; and beginning to threaten and elbow the attendants of the marshal, cried out that they would lose their lives in defence of their bishop;* so that it was in vain to proceed with the process of accusation; and the spiritual court, assembled with much pomp and silent order, was forced to break up, amid shouts, and blows, and confusion.†

* Leland Collectan. vol. I. p. 379 and 380.

† Rapin's History of England, vol. I. p. 480. I would make one remark on this riotous convocation. Its purpose

Some time after this, these same bishops, in furtherance of the injunctions of the Pope, held a meeting in the Archiepiscopal Chapel at Lambeth, to which Wickliff was again

was to examine Wickliff and his heretical opinions; but owing to the great unpopularity of John of Gaunt with the Londoners, the violent conduct of this nobleman, and the jealousy of Lord Percy interfering with the rights of the citizens and their mayor, a riot arose which evidently had nothing to do with the Reformer or his doctrines, and in which he took no part. We are not to identify his sacred cause with the quarrel between the Duke and the infuriated mob who surrounded him; and the observation of a historian of the church, that the conduct of the bishop and archbishop seems to have been more unexceptionable than that of Wickliff, is wholly unsupported by any historical authority. That it was more unexceptionable than that of his patrons, is undoubtedly true; but we must not forget that a monk of St Albans, whom we know to have been grossly ignorant of Wickliff's opinions, and who, like his brethren, was interested to decry them and him, is the source from which the whole account of this convocation is taken. The same historian says, it would have given real pleasure to a lover of Christian reformation, if he could have discovered any proofs that Wickliff protested against the insolent conduct of his patrons. To have protested in the midst of a tumult, which was of so furious a description, that it again broke out next day, and ended not without murder, would have been vain and useless; and had he done so, any monkish historian was too much a partizan of the hierarchy, and too anxious to confound the principles of Wickliff with those of riot and disorder, to have mentioned the circumstance.

summoned, and where he again appeared, and it is said gave in a paper, in which he explained the several articles of heresy imputed against him.* But before he could begin to defend himself, some of the London citizens who had adopted his opinions, and with them a tumultuous rabble, broke into the chapel, and terrified the bishops by the rude and unmeasured terms with which they took up his quarrel; and in the midst of this, Sir Lewis Clifford, one of Wickliff's followers, came with a message from the Queen Mother, Joanna, the widow of the Black Prince, commanding them not to proceed to any definitive sentence against the accused. These things confounded and alarmed them so, that, in the words of Walsingham, "their speech became soft as oil,

* Lewis, p. 59. The authority on which it is said that Wickliff presented a paper, explaining the several heretical conclusions, for the maintaining of which he was arraigned, is Walsingham's Hist. Angliæ, p. 206, 207, 208. It is probable that this paper, which is given by this historian, and translated by Lewis, p. 59, is not quite genuine, as in another defence of his conclusions, presented by Wickliff to the Parliament which met April 5, 1378, there are very different arguments from those given by Walsingham. This second defence will be found in Lewis, App. No. 40, and translated, p. 67.

to the public loss of their own dignity, and the damage of the whole church." They retained sense and courage enough, notwithstanding, to declare themselves wholly dissatisfied with Wickliff's explanations of the alleged heresies; and having commanded him no more to repeat such propositions, either in the schools of the University, or in his sermons, they allowed him to depart.

In this manner did Wickliff escape from the snares of the Pope, and come unhurt out of the paws of the Bishops of London and Canterbury. At this time happened that schism in the papacy between Urban the Sixth and Clement the Eighth, which caused so much confusion and bloodshed in Christendom, but which was highly fortunate for Wickliff, as nearly a year elapsed before Urban was acknowledged in England to be the true and lawful Pope. This, therefore, gave him an interval of peace, in which he not only composed a work on the schism between the Roman pontiffs, but published one of his most noted and valuable treatises, "Upon the Truth of Scripture;" in which he contended, "that the Scriptures ought to be translated in English—that

Christ's law is by itself sufficient to rule Christ's church—that a Christian man well understanding it, may thence gather sufficient knowledge during his pilgrimage here on earth; and that since all truth is contained in Holy Scripture, whatever disputation is not originally thence deduced, is to be accounted profane."* But although he came thus safely out of this threatened tribulation, yet the harassing anxiety into which he had been thrown by the summons from the Pope, and the high state of excitement which his mind underwent, threw him into a fever, which brought him to the very gates of death.

During this illness, and when he lay weak and languishing upon his bed, the door of his sick room was opened, and four venerable-looking persons, in the habits of friars, entered the room; after them came four others, apparently men of note and dignity, in ermined robes, and gold chains round their necks. Alarmed at this visitation, the sick man feebly inquired, who these might be; upon which one of the friars addressed him, and told him, that the

* Lewis's Life, p. 81.

friars mendicant, whom, in his days of health, he had grievously traduced, had sent the four regents of their four orders, and along with them four senators of the city, called aldermen of the wards, to implore him, that now that he was at the point of death, he would no longer retain an impenitent and hardened heart, but would express his contrition for the crying injuries he had heaped upon their order; and that withal, they wished him health, and a recovery from his present affliction. On hearing this, Wickliff raised himself a little from the bed, and bade the servants who were by, place pillows behind him, so that he could sit upright; which being done, all emaciated as he was, he fixed his eyes upon the speaker, and cried, with a loud voice, "I shall not die, but live, and yet declare the evil deeds of the friars." Upon which the regents, with their attendants, huddled out of the apartment in great confusion.

Although he thus had experience, into what manifold troubles his love of the truth and desire to publish it to the world were likely to plunge him, Wickliff did not bate one jot in this good work; but, on the contrary, redou-

bled his endeavours to open the eyes of the world to the gross impurities and crying encroachments of the Church of Rome, in proportion as he found how precarious was his life, and how little time might perhaps be allowed him by the great Taskmaster, to labour in the vineyard.

As his zeal increased, so did his strength; and his next blow against the Church of Rome, was one which it felt to its centre. This was no less than the translation of the whole Bible into the English tongue, for the benefit of the poor of the people; an undertaking which, it is probable, had before this occupied much of his time, and to the completion of which he now devoted his undivided energy. In comparison to this, all his other offences against the Roman Catholic faith were of trivial moment, skirmishes with a reed against the outworks of the enemy. He now put on his armour of proof, and with invincible might leapt over the barriers of their fenced city, and hewing down all opposition, never rested till he had reached that dark tower where the lamp of the gospel was immured in worse than Cimmerian gloom, and dashed open the doors

stiff with the rust of a thousand years, and let out a flood of healing light upon England.

Till this time, there had been no attempt to communicate to the people a complete version of the Scriptures in their own language. The Christian faith, it is well known, reached this island before the end of the first century. Britain was then in its habits and language completely a Roman colony; and if read at all, the Scriptures were read by those who were converted, in a Latin version; but towards the middle of the fifth century, Hengist and Horsa, the two Saxon brethren, came with their armies to the assistance of Vortigern, with all their barbarian rites and ceremonies fresh upon them, and in the end, by the death of Cadwallader, the last of the British kings, established the Saxon Heptarchy in Britain.

Under this dominion of the Saxons in England, which extended throughout three hundred and twenty years, till the Danes overspread the land, there is no doubt that many translations of the Holy Scriptures were published; and some of these, which still exist amongst the rich archives of our national collections, have been given by the labours of

learned men to the world. And it is well worthy of remark, without descending into any knotty antiquarian researches, that in an ancient Anglo-Saxonic version of the Scriptures, we find a marginal direction, intimating that "this gospel is to be read on Mid-Winter's Mass Even," from which we may draw this most important truth, that at this time portions of the Holy Scriptures were read in the public service of the church, in a language which the great body of the people understood. After the abolition of the Saxon dominion, the Danes domineered for forty-seven short and bloody years in England; and then came that signal defeat at Hastings which brought Norman William and his multitudes of hardy and haughty barons to oppress, and devour, and plunder in the land. And now, as the island had changed masters, so these new masters soon extirpated the Saxon dialect, and introduced their Norman-French in the stead of the native language. In this manner, there came to be two languages in England; this Norman-French, which was the language currently in use amongst the barons and the clergy, and the ancient Saxon, which gradually

grew so corrupted and admixed with Norman vocables, that few of the lower classes could understand it in its purity. The Scriptures, however, as we have seen, existed then only in Latin or in Saxon translations. The Latin was a dead-letter to the bulk of the clergy of those days, mostly ignorant and proud Normans, in whose hands the cross-bow, or the battle-axe, were oftener seen than the Bible; and as for the Saxon, they utterly despised it, as the language of the slaves whose land they had taken from them: a convenient opinion, therefore, began to rise amongst them, and soon grew into great authority, that "the knowledge of the Scriptures was not necessary for the people; and that it was not lawful for private Christians to read them in the tongue wherein they were born;" a wicked and soul-killing dogma, suggested by the father of lies, and which growing out of this age, struck its roots deeper into the next century, till, through the cunning and craft of the ecclesiastical orders, it grew up into a mighty heresy, which spread mildew and poison over the whole spiritual world. Yet even in those dark days, the truth had its witnesses; and a man whose

name is now almost forgotten on earth, bore testimony, "That in the primitive church, it was forbidden to any one to speak in an unknown tongue, unless there was some one to interpret; since it was agreeable to common sense that it was a thing perfectly useless for a man to speak, and not be understood.—Hence," he continues, "grew that laudable custom in some churches, that after the gospel was pronounced according to the letter, or read in Latin, immediately it was explained to the people in the vulgar tongue. But what shall we say of our times, when there's scarce any one to be found who understands what he reads or hears?"* Such are the words of John Beleth, a Parisian divine of note in his own day, in his Procœmium to a work entitled "The Explication of Divine Offices," written in the end of the twelfth century, at the time that in England, Richard of the Lion-Heart, for the glory of destroying the infidels, allowed his kingdom at home to fall into extreme decay and confusion.

Some time after this, under the reign of

* This was in the year 1190.

Edward the Third, we meet with a noble endeavour, made by an obscure hermit of the Order of St Augustine, to translate parts of the Holy Scriptures into English;* and in

* He completed an English translation of the Psalter, and wrote a gloss or commentary upon it. It is preceded by a prologue, which is itself ushered in by this rubric:—"Here begyneth the Prologue upon the Sauter, that Richard, Hermite of Hampole, translated into Englyshe after the Sentence of Doctours and Resoun." The account given by the author of his work, is curious, and in some parts not very intelligible. "In this werke, I seek no straunge Ynglys, bot lightest and communest, and swilk that is most like unto the Latyne; so that thai that knawis noght the Latyne, be thai Ynglis, may com to many Latyne wordis. In the translacione, I felogh the letter als mekille as I may; and thor I fyne no proper Ynglys, I felogh the wit of the wordis; so that thai that shalle rede it, thern dar not drede errynge. In the expowning, I felogh holi doctors. For it may comen into sum envious mannes honde, that knowys not what he suld saye, that wille saye that I wist not what I sayd, and so do harm tille hym and tille other."

It points to a very low and early period in the history of translation, when it was the first wish of the author to find words as like as possible to the Latin, and where a scrupulous attention to the meaning of the original, or the wit of the words, as it is called, was a secondary object in the mind of the translator.

In the Harleian Collection, we find a different translation of the Psalter into English, accompanied with a gloss, and in the King's Library, an imperfect English version of the same, completely different from the Harleian manuscript; but the exact age of these two cannot be ascertained. In the

the archives of our royal and academic libraries, are still to be found some insulated attempts to translate into the English, then spoken, various portions of the Old and New Testament Scriptures; but these versions of the Book of Life were confined to the closet, or the cloister, and appear rather to have been the helps employed for the increase of private devotion in their authors, than the fruits of a sincere desire to preach the gospel to the poor. So that it may be stated with strict historical truth, that so far as concerned their salvation by the preaching of the Holy Scriptures, our British and Saxon ancestors were in a better state than their English descendants after the Norman Conquest; and that this proud and warlike, but ignorant and cruel nation of Normans, in addition to the various and multiplied calamities of rapine, private murder, lewdness, riot, and every species of unlicensed disorder which they brought

Library of Benet College in Cambridge, there is preserved a commentary, written in the English spoken after the Conquest, on several books of the New Testament, of which some specimens will be found in Lewis, p. 16.—*Hist. of English Translations of the Bible.*

upon England, added this the more, that they shut up the light of the truth, and forbade the Bible to be communicated to the people.

This deplorable spiritual darkness continued for three hundred years; and during this long period, what millions of souls took their blind flight into eternity, without having heard the message of the gospel, is awful to be thought of. At length Wickliff appeared, and in the providence of God, did more in one short life for the human race, than the whole body of the Catholic clergy had effected for many centuries. And in these glorious doings of his, the most eminent was this which we are now considering—the translation of the Bible into English.

The feelings with which the clergy regarded this horrid attempt, as they were pleased to term it, are not easily described.* They cried out that the gospel pearl, in being "freely communicated to the people, was cast to swine, and trodden under feet; that the jewel of the

* It was published, says Mr Baber, in his Memoirs of the Life of Wickliff, in 1380; but according to a MS. note on the copy in Emanuel College, Cambridge, it seems not to have been fully finished till 1383.

church, which was the Bible, had been committed expressly to the clergy and the doctors, in order that by them it might be ministered to the laity and weaker persons, according to the exigency of the times, and the wants of these weaker members; that to translate it, so that all could read it, was to intrude upon what had ever been the chief talent committed to the clergy; and to make the Bible, which had been heretofore reverenced, both by the clergy and the laity, the common jest of both orders."* And such miserable arguments did not want abettors amongst those whose interest it was to keep up the lucrative monopoly of selling to the souls of men such hollow consolations as the Catholic religion held out, and spreading wider and wider the poison of sin and error amongst the people. No wonder, then, that it was the complaint of that brave baron and intrepid soldier of Christ, Lord Cobham, "That they who have the key of cunning, have locked up the truth of Christ's teaching under many wardes, and have hidden

* Knighton de Eventibus Angliæ. Twysden, Hist. Anglican. Script. vol. II. p. 2644.

it from his children."* But where now is the man in these days of superior Christian knowledge, and when the facility and frequency of our study of the word of God ought to produce a more fervent faith, who, like this Lord Cobham, would suffer his body to be burned, that they might bear testimony to the truth; or, like Wickliff, would bear to be stigmatized as a heretic, and give up all hopes of worldly preferment, and peril his life and substance, and wear out his hours and his years in watching and study, rising up early, and going late to rest, and eating his bread, not in the sweat of his brow, but what is far more painful, in the sweat of his intellect, that by his means the gospel might be preached in their own language to the poor!

The extreme ignorance of the clergy of those unhappy times is easily seen in the nature of the arguments which they brought against Wickliff's translation. They pretend-

* "Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge; ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."—*Luke*, chap. xi. v. 52.

In a MS. treatise, entitled "Husbandman's Prayer and Complaint," attributed by Lewis and by Bale to Lord Cobham, but given by Tanner to Wickliff.—See Biblioth. p. 561.

ed that men should not now attempt to translate the Bible into English, because they were not holy nor learned enough for such an undertaking; and with extreme absurdity, they added, "that the four great doctors of the Latin Church durst never do it." To this Wickliff replied, "That the first of these objections had no good ground in reason or charity; that it made more against St Jerome, and the first seventy translators, and against Holy Church, than against him and his friends, who had now translated the Bible into English; since St Jerome was not so holy as the Apostles and Evangelists, whose books he translated into Latin; nor were the LXX so holy as Moses and the Prophets." As to Holy Church, he affirmed, "that she had approved not only the true translation of mean Christian men, but even of open heretics; much more, therefore," says he, "ought the Church of England to approve the true and holy translation of simple men, that would, for no good on earth, by their wit or their power, put away the least truth, yea, the least letter or tittle of Holy Writ, that beareth substance or charge." *

* Lewis's Life of Wickliff, p. 85.

But although the clergy were thus mad against Wickliff for his audacious attempt to communicate the gospel to the people in their own tongue, yet friends were raised up to him amongst the nobility and barons of England; and when, about the close of the fourteenth century, ten years after the period of which I now speak, a bill was brought into the House of Lords, to forbid the reading of this translation of the Bible, John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster, stood up, and said, "that seeing that all nations besides, had the law of God in their own tongue, it was disgraceful that the people of England should be counted the dregs of all men, and be alone interdicted from perusing it;" a clear proof that Wickliff's was the first public translation of the Holy Scriptures into English.*

Not long after this time, one William Butler, a Franciscan friar, in a determination which he published, asserted, "That the prelates ought not to suffer that every one at his pleasure should read the Scripture, translated into Latin, because," adds this sage shave-

* John Fox, Præfat. Evangel. Saxon.

ling, " it is plain from experience, this has been many ways the occasion of falling into heresies and errors. It is not, therefore, politick, that any one wheresoever and whensoever he will, should give himself to the fervent study of the Scriptures." And how far this idea was carried, we may learn from the ordinance of the University of Oxford, " that priests and curates were not to be allowed to read the Scriptures, till they were nine or ten years standing there;" and from that shocking dogma maintained in a work considered of great authority in those days, " that the decrees of bishops in the church, are of greater authority, weight, and dignity, than the Scriptures themselves." *

In answer to these declarations of interested and wicked men, which may well be called accursed, Wickliff, in his prologue to his translation of the Bible, maintained the absolute necessity of all Christians coming forward openly, and being encouraged to study freely, and without any reservation, the whole Bible. He

* Usher de Script. et Sacris Vern. p. 163, and Walden Doctr. Tri. tom. I. book ii. c. 24, quoted in Lewis's Life, p. 88.

affirmed, that "Christian men and women, old and young, should study fast in the New Testament; and that no man of simple wit should be afraid unmeasurably to study in the text of Holy Writ; because the New Testament is of full authority, and open to the understanding of simple men, as to the points that are most needful to salvation.—The text of Holy Writ," he observed, "comprised the whole words necessary for attaining everlasting life; and that he had the true understanding of Holy Writ, who best preserved himself under the governance of meekness and charity.—Is it not openly heresy," he exclaimed, "to imagine that the gospel, with its truth and freedom, is insufficient for the salvation of Christian men, without being assisted in its blessed operations, by monkish ceremonies, and statutes of sinful men, invented under the reign of Satan and of Antichrist? Is it not manifest, that the laws and ordinances of men can only be good, in so far as they are grounded upon Holy Scripture, and therefore invented for the common profit of Christian people?—If," he concluded with a noble fervour—"if any man in earth, or angel from heaven, teacheth us

things contrary to Holy Writ, or aught against reason and charity, it becomes us to flee from him, as from the foul fiend of hell, and to hold us steadfastly to life and death, to the truth and freedom of the holy gospel of Jesus Christ."

In order that this translation of the New Testament into English should be more easily dispersed amongst the common people, it was parcelled out into little volumes. These sometimes contained the four Gospels, at other times St Paul's Epistles, and in some cases the Catholic Epistles and Apocalypse.* The exact time spent by Wickliff upon this work, and the assistance which he met with, cannot now be ascertained. His method was to translate from the Latin vulgate then in use, which, indeed, was the only course he could follow, as he was not acquainted with the Greek or Hebrew tongues; and what is much to be re-

* Lewis was in possession of a small volume, which included the Gospel of St John, the seven Catholic Epistles, and the Apocalypse. If we may believe a note, written on a copy of part of this translation, containing the New Testament, and which is preserved in Emanuel College, Cambridge; it was completed by its author in 1383. The transcription, according to the same short notice, was made in 1397; and the price for which the copy sold was ten shillings.

gretted, his version is in many places so rigidly literal, so little conformed to the idiomatic differences between the two languages, that to those unacquainted with the Latin it is frequently very obscure.* This is the more unaccountable, as we are assured, that the dispersion of the Scriptures amongst the people was one principal object which this great man had in view, and formed an important ground of accusation upon the part of his persecutors in the church. Although persecuted, however, for this good work, we are not to imagine that its author was wholly cast off or defenceless. His doctrines had now made a great impression in England. He was in the highest favour with the common people, to whom he addressed many works in their own language, preserving its ancient Saxon purity, in order to make himself more generally understood. One of his greatest enemies bears witness to this popularity, affirming, that his doctrine began to fill the compass of the kingdom, and

* The New Testament has been published by Mr Baber, in 1810, with a short, but interesting introductory memoir of the translator, and a more accurate and valuable catalogue of his works, than had hitherto been given by Bale, Tanner, or Lewis.

his opinions; like suckers out of the root of a tree, to be everywhere multiplied; so that you could not meet two people on a road, but you might be sure one was a Wickliffite.* Not only by the people, but by some of the knights and barons of England, was Wickliff keenly supported; and, as has been already shown, when the persecution of his opinions, and the opposition to his preaching, had reached their height, so that the congregations which he assembled were dispersed or attacked by violence, these brave men surrounded him, and the preachers who followed him, with a steel wall of swords and spears; from the midst of which, he preached the word of God to them in great confidence and security. The principal leaders amongst these knights are worthy of record, and their names must not be forgotten. They were Sir Thomas Latimer, Sir Lewis Clifforde, Sir John Peche, Sir Richard Story, Sir Reginalde de Hilton, Sir John Trussel, Sir William Nevylle, Sir John Clen-

* Knighton de Event. Angliæ, p. 2663. The passage in the copy of Knighton, which I have before me, (Twysden, vol. II. p. 2663,) is not exactly as Lewis has translated it; but the discrepancy is immaterial.

boun, Sir John Mountague, Sir Lawrence de St Martin, and, lastly, the noble Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, who suffered death for his attachment to the principles of the Reformation, men mostly of ancient family, and sufficient power and maintenance. Nor was this all. Wickliff had still higher and more royal supporters, who, although perhaps they did not equal his friends of the lower orders in sincerity, exceeded them in power. King Edward the Third set a high value on the reformer, and, as we have seen, employed him in affairs of moment. His bountiful mother, the University of Oxford, was proud to have such a son sprung from her loins, and highly esteemed and favoured him; so that his writings there, for many years before his death, were as much read and studied, as Aristotle or Aquinas. Joan, the widow of that heroic person the Black Prince, was his firm friend; the noble John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, as we have often seen, interposed his high authority between him and persecution; Henry, Lord Percy, the Earl Marshal of England, scrupled not to lift his baton in defence of Wickliff, even in the face of the Primate of

England; and he found a special friend and a diligent student of his writings in Anne, the Queen of Richard the Second, the daughter and sister of emperors, a princess whose least recommendation was her high rank, and in whose character, learning, virtue, and deep piety, formed a beautiful and perfect union. In a sermon preached at her funeral, Archbishop Arundel remarks of this princess, that "Although she was a stranger, yet she constantly studied the four Gospels in English, and the Expositions of the Doctors; and in the study of these, and the reading of godly books, she was more diligent than even the prelates themselves, although their office and business required it."* The happy effects of this pious princess's example were not limited by her life. After her death, her foreign attendants returned into Bohemia, and carried along with them not a few of Wickliff's writings, which proved the blessed means of promoting the Reformation in that country. Upon the whole, therefore, although never quite free from persecution by the part

* Usher, de Script. Sacr. Vernac. p. 161, and Strype's Epist. Dedic. before his Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer.

of the more bigotted of the Romish clergy, Wickliff could not fail to enjoy many intervals of great happiness and security. The enemy, indeed, was ever busy sowing tares amongst his wheat; but much seed fell upon good ground, and being watered by the kindly dew of heaven, sprung up and bore fruit. His doctrine took root in many simple, believing, and honest hearts; and although at length the power of darkness prevailed, and for a season smothered the light of truth and saving knowledge, which he had so industriously kindled, yet it was never totally extinguished; and when Luther came, a hundred and thirty years after, he found the ashes still warm.

Having completed the greatest work of his life, the translation of the Bible, this indefatigable servant of Christ was far from considering his labours at an end, or deeming it lawful for him to lay down his controversial weapons. Single and unsupported as he stood, I mean in his theological labours, against the mitred and purple-palled hierarchy of the Romish Church, it was never permitted him to

retire, as they did, from the lists, and send others out to continue the battle. He had to sleep in full panoply upon the field; and when he had gained a single inch of ground, to remain on it armed and ready. Well might be applied to him the noble passage of St Paul to the Ephesians, where he exhorts his brethren of that church to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. He put on the whole armour of God, that he might be able to stand against the wiles of the devil; his loins were girt about with truth; he had on the breast-plate of righteousness; his feet were shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; he took to himself the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which was the word of God; for it was his lot not to wrestle only against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Full, therefore, of this high and unwearied resolution, he now directed his attack against a principal and favourite tenet of the Romish Church, equally abhorrent to the word of the Bible, and to the suggestions of natural

reason. This was the noted doctrine of transubstantiation.

For eight centuries after the death of Christ, it had been the belief of the Catholic Church, that the elements of bread and wine used in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, were only figuratively meant to represent the body and blood of Christ. This sound opinion is expressed in one of the homilies of the Saxon Church. "There is much (difference)," says that homily, "betwixt the body which Christ suffered in, and the body hallowed to housell; this latter being only his ghostly body gathered to many cornes, without blood and bone, without limb, without soule; and therefore nothing is to be understood therein bodily, but all is to be ghostly (spiritually) understood."* In the face of this simple belief, grounded on the explicit declaration of Scripture, a certain conceited French monk, named Pasquier Radbert, towards the beginning of the ninth cen-

* This homily, says Lewis, p. 90, was published by Archbishop Parker; with the attestation of the Archbishop of York, and thirteen bishops; and printed at London by John Day, dwelling over Aldersgate, beneath St Martin's, without any date.

tury, thought proper to bring forth from the shallows of his scholastic brains, this strange heresy:—"Although," says he, "in the sacrament, there be the figure of bread and wine, yet we must believe, that after the consecration, they are nothing else but the body and blood of Christ.—And," he continues, "to say something more wonderful, they are plainly no other than the flesh which was born of Mary, suffered on the cross, and rose again from the grave."*

This Radbert, according to Bellarmine, was the first author who wrote copiously and in earnest on the subject of the reality of Christ's body in the Eucharist; and an opinion which involved a blasphemous absurdity, was soon, through the literary efforts of the friars, supported by a mode of explanation which rivalled in absurdity the original doctrine. Borrowing from their system of scholastic philosophy some of those favourite expressions with which they were ever ready to darken knowledge, the friars maintained, "That the accidents and forms of bread and wine do remain

* From a work entitled *De Corpore et Sanguine Domini*, c. i.

by God's omnipotent power without a subject, after the words of consecration, as they did before in the substance of bread—that these accidents of bread and wine may remain, by the power of God, in the sacrament, without their proper subject,"—words which I shall not pretend to explain to my reader.*

The divinity lectures which Wickliff read in the University, gave him an opportunity of introducing his animadversions upon the tenets of the Romish Church as to transubstantiation, with that prudence and caution

* Father Parson's Review of Ten Public Disputations. "Whoever will not believe Christ's natural body in the sacrament under the form of bread, that man would not have believed Christ himself to have been God, if he had seen him hanging upon the Cross in the form of a servant."—PASQUIER RADBERT, *De Corp. et Sanguine Christi.* There is a passage of Wickliff, in his Dialogue, which inculcates nearly the same doctrine; maintaining that the form of bread remains, but yet that, after the consecration, the bread begins to be the body of Christ. "We do not at all believe that the Baptist, because he was made Helias by virtue of the words of Christ, ceased to be John, or anything that he substantially was before. Agreeably to this, it must not be believed, that, though the bread begin to be the body of Christ, by virtue of his words, it ceases to be bread, since hitherto it has been bread substantially."—LEWIS, p. 94.

which he who sets himself against long-established errors, sanctioned by habit, and canonized in weak minds by implicit belief, would do well always to exercise. In the summer of the year 1381, he began to attack this error in his lectures; and quietly demonstrating its extreme absurdity, restored the true and ancient doctrine of the Lord's Supper, convincing his audience, that for nearly a thousand years after the death of Christ, no such notion had ever entered the head of the greatest and wisest doctors of the church. He drew up and published twelve conclusions, in which he embodied his notions upon the true meaning and nature of this sacrament, as it was to be found in the words of the Bible. These conclusions are yet preserved in manuscript;* and, in the very first of them, he asserts, "That the consecrated host which we see upon the altar, is neither Christ, nor any part of him, but an effectual sign of him." In the fifth, he maintains, that transubstantiation, idemplification, impanation, words which the friars, or baptists of signs, as he calls his oppo-

* In the Bodleian Library, Hyp. 163, and printed by Lewis in his Appendix, Coll. 19.

nents in this controversy, are constantly employing and bandying about, have no foundation in Scripture.*

After publishing these dogmata or conclusions, Wickliff offered, according to the custom of the times, to defend them publicly in the schools, against all who presented themselves; but this was prevented by those who bore a great sway in the University; and Dr William de Berton, the chancellor, eager to silence him, and dreading the influence of Wickliff's eloquence, if any public exposition or defence of his new opinions was allowed, bethought him of a plan by which his mouth should be stopt. He got twelve doctors of the University to sign with him a programma, by which, under pain of imprisonment and suspension from all scholastic acts, no member of the University was permitted to hold or dis-

* The eighth of these conclusions is as follows:—"Sacramentum Eucharistiæ est in figura corpus Christi et sanguis, in quo transubstantiantur panis et vinum, cujus remanet post consecrationem aliquitas, licet quoad considerationem fidelium sit sopita."—"The sacrament of the Eucharist is figuratively the body and blood of Christ, into which is transubstantiated the bread and wine, whose somethingness remains after consecration, although it be, as it is considered by the faithful, laid asleep."

pute upon these unauthorized doctrines.* Thus cut off from all hope of disseminating the truth by preaching or argument, Wickliff betook himself again to his pen; and in addition to this, boldly appealed from the chancellor to the King in parliament.† In his work entitled, "Of Feigned Contemplative Life,"‡ he gave the following explanation of his new opinions upon the Eucharist:—"The Eucharist is the body of Christ in the form of bread.

* Memoirs of the Life of Wickliff, by Baber, p. 21, and Lewis, p. 95 and 96.

† This appeal has been printed by Dr James, but is so exceeding rare, as very seldom to be met with. I have a copy before me, preserved in the valuable library of my friend Mr David Constable. It is entitled, "A Complaint of John Wickliff to the King and Parliament," and consists of four parts. The first is, "That the rule laid down by Christ in the gospel, for the attainment of salvation, is more perfect than that invented by St Francis, St Benedict, or any other." The second asserts, "That the King has power to punish ecclesiastical persons convicted of certain crimes." The third article treats of tithes and offerings. And the fourth affirms, "That Christ's teaching and belief of the sacrament of his own body, which is plainly taught by Christ and his apostles in gospels and epistles, may be taught openly in churches of Christian people." And Wickliff concludes with a prayer, "That God of his mercy stirre these priests to preach the gospel in word and life, and beware of Satan's deceits."

‡ Lewis, p. 91.

The right faith of Christian men is this—that this worshipful sacrament is bread and Christ's body, as Jesu Christ is very God and very man. And this faith is grounded in Christ's own word in the gospel of St Matthew, Mark, Luke, and by St Paul; and plainly in Holy Writ, and by Austin, Jerome, Ambrose, and most holy saints, and most cunning in Holy Writ, and thereto accordeth reason and wit at the full. In these gospels is the form taught of Christ, that our Lord Jesu Christ at the supper took bread in his hands, and blessed, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, 'Eat ye all of this,—this is my body;' and so of the chalice, and commanded them to don this sacrament *in mind of him*. And St Paul, that had his gospel not by man, but by revelation of Jesu Christ, saith thus in his first epistle to the Corinthians, 'Is not the bread that we break the communion of the Lord's body?' And certes, he understandeth that it is so after the speech of Holy Writ; therefore, in the same epistle to the Corinthians, after the form of consecration, he clepeth three times this sacrament bread. And this gospel of St Luke saith, that Christ's disciples knew him in the

breaking of bread, and this bread was the sacrament of the altar, as St Austin writeth. And in Actibus Apostolorum is said thus:— "And Christian men were dwelling in teaching of apostles, and in communing of breaking of bread. Since St Paul saith, 'The bread we break is communing of Christ's body.' Ask these heretics whether this were sacred bread or unsacred, and they must say that it was sacred, for else it were not a communing of Christ's body. Then must the hereticks needs say, that this sacrament is bread that we break. And since Christ may not be, this bread is his body, as he saith in the gospel: Also, in the canon of the mass, after the consecration, we call this sacrament holy bread of everlasting life, and chalice of everlasting health: Also, in the story of the feast of this sacrament, we call it thrice bread, and say the bread of angels is made the bread of man, and heavenly bread giveth end to figures of the old law. And in the same, this is very bread of children. And in the ——— * of the feast we read thus,— God's son made very bread his flesh, by virtue

* Deest in the manuscript.

of his word, and wine his blood. And in the secret of the middle mass on Christmas day, we pray thus, that this substance of earth bring to us that thing that is *ghostly*, that is, Christ's body. Then this substance shall not be turned to nought, but be sacred, and so dwell after the consecration. And St Austin saith in a sermon that is written in the Pope's law, that thing that is seen is bread, and that thing that eyes shew or tell is the chalice, but it is as much as the faith asketh to be learned (that) the bread is Christ's body, and the chalice, that is, the wine in the chalice, is Christ's blood. Also, Austin saith in a sermon that is written in the Pope's law, Ye should not eat that body nor drink that blood, the which blood those men that doomed me to the cross have shed out. It is in truth the same, yet not the same, (for) it is the same body and blood invisibly, and not the same visibly, nevertheless it is needful that it be understood invisibly. Also, Jerome in an epistle that he made to Elbidian, saith thus,—Hear we that that bread that Christ break and blessed, and gave to his disciples to eat, is the body of our Saviour. And in the Pope's law, with great congregation of

bishops and clerks and great advisement, it is written thus:—I believe with heart and knowledge by mouth, that the bread and wine that are put on the altar, are, after consecration, not only the sacrament, but the flesh and blood of Jesu Christ in truth. Then since the authorities of Christ and his apostles are always true, and also the authorities of these saints and clerks; since they accord with Holy Writ and reason, we say that this sacrament is very bread, and also very Christ's body, and we teach this true belief to Christian men openly; and let Lords maintain this truth, as they are bound upon pain of damnation, since it is openly taught in Holy Writ, and by reason and wit. And we condemn this cursed heresy of Antichrist, and his hypocrites and worldly priests who say, that this sacrament is neither bread nor Christ's body, but accident without subject, and Christ's body there under. For this is not taught in Holy Writ, but is fully against St Austin and holy saints, and reason and wit. For Austin saith in many books, that there may none accident be without subject."

It cannot be denied that in this long quo-

tation there is much obscurity, and that Wickliffe, although he set himself violently against that absurd notion of accident without subject, appears to be puzzling himself in this passage to reconcile as much as possible the figurative sense attached to the elements of bread and wine, with the literal meaning of the words, "This is my body." And thus, perhaps, he imagined, that without too rudely giving a shock to the long-established opinions of the Romish church on this subject, he might teach its ministers gradually to sift the reasons of their faith, and to weigh candidly and calmly the opposite meanings which might be given to the same scriptural expressions. But his mind gradually cleared up from this moral twilight, and in some of his other treatises we find him expressing himself with a far greater precision and orthodoxy. In his book called the Dialogue he writes thus:—"The Scripture faith asserts, that seven ears and seven fat kine are seven years of plenty; and, as St Austin observes, the Scripture does not say that they signify those years, but that they are those years; and such a form of speaking you may frequently find in Scripture.

All such speeches denote that the subject is ordained of God to figure the thing predicated according to its fitness; and so it may be said that the sacramental bread is after that manner specially the body of Christ."* Again, in one of his conclusions said to be found in his Book of the Sermon of our Lord on the Mount, he observes, "As Christ is at one and the same time both God and man, so in the same way is the consecrated host at the same time both the body of Christ, at least figuratively, and true bread naturally, or, which amounts to the same meaning, it is figuratively Christ, and naturally bread."

The programma, or decree, already mentioned, which the Chancellor of the University, William de Barton, procured to be published against Wickliff, accordingly accuses him of maintaining, that in the venerable sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the body and blood of Christ are not existing essentially or substantially, nor even bodily, but figuratively or tropically; whereas, it adds, the true faith is, that by the sacramental words, duly pronounced by the priest, the bread and wine upon the

* Dialogue, B. iv. c. 7. Lewis, p. 94.

altar are transubstantiated or substantially converted into the very body and blood of Christ; so that Christ is there verily in his own proper bodily presence,"* an opinion which, to use the strong language of Wickliff himself in his Wicket, led expressly to the absurd and blasphemous notion, that every day the priest made of bread the body of the Lord, and the flesh and blood of Jesus Christ. The consideration of these strange and unintelligible doctrines regarding this sacrament, may well convince us of the truth of that observation made by one of its latest and most able expounders, "That no Christian ordinance has been more perverted by superstition than the Lord's supper, and no portion of Christian truth more involved in obscurity and error than that which respects this ordinance. False opinions and superstitious usages (he continues to remark) mutually produce and support each other. By this malignant action and reaction, in reference to the Lord's supper, where the emblematical nature of the institution, and the figurative language in which, of course, much of the truth respecting it was couched, afford-

* Lewis, Appendix, Coll. No. 20.

ed peculiar facilities for misapprehension, misrepresentation, and delusion, we find, within the course of a few centuries, the simple rite of an assembly of Christians eating bread and drinking wine in grateful commemoration of the expiatory sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, converted into a splendid and complicated ceremony. In the noble language of Milton, 'The feast of free grace and adoption to which Christ invited his disciples to sit as brethren and co-heirs of the happy covenant, which at that table was to be sealed to them, even that feast of love and heavenly admitted fellowship, the seal of filial grace, became the subject of horror and glouting admiration, pageanted about like a dreadful idol.' It is in this way that the plain, intelligible doctrine, that in this ordinance we are presented with an emblematical representation and conformation of the great principles of our religion, which, by strengthening our belief, contributes to our spiritual improvement, gives way to a portentous dogma, of which it is impossible to say whether it be more absurd or impious, that in this ordinance the bread and wine are, by the mystic power of a priest's repeating the words

of institution, converted into the body and blood and divinity of Jesus Christ, which, after having been offered to God by the priest, as an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead, are literally eaten and drunk by the recipients."*

With regard to Wickliff's sentiments upon the subject of the bodily presence in the eucharist, we may judge from the quotations already given, that while he steadily opposed the doctrine of transubstantiation and its accompanying explanation of accident without subject, he seems in some places to point at the idea of consubstantiation, by which was meant the real, though impalpable and invisible, presence of the body and blood of Christ in the consecrated elements, along with and under the substance of bread and wine; a doctrine scarcely more intelligible than the Popish tenet of transubstantiation, yet, at first, abetted and maintained by the Lutheran churches. But, although unsettled, Wickliff's opinions were on this great subject sufficiently and explicitly heterodox to incur the hatred of the clergy;

* Introductory Essay to Henry's Communicant's Companion, by the Rev. John Brown, p. 10.

and upon the murder of Archbishop Sudbury, in 1381, and the election of Courteney, Bishop of London, to the primacy, a dark cloud began to gather round him, in whose bosom the thunder of the ecclesiastical censures was gradually forming and collecting. It was in vain that the Reformer, foreseeing and dreading the storm, and in prosecution of his appeal from the chancellor's decree against him, presented his complaint to the King in parliament,* in which he maintained, that "All persons, of what kin soever, private sects, or singular religion made by sinful men, may freely, without any letting or bodily pain, leave that private rule, or new religion founded by sinful men, and stably hold the rule of Jesus Christ, taken and given by Christ to his apostles, as far more perfect than any new religion founded by sinful men." And in which, with reference to the question of the Eucharist, he maintained, "That Christ's teaching and belief of the sacrament of his own body, that is plainly taught by Christ and his apostles, in gospels and epistles, may be taught openly in

* See the contents of this Appeal, supra, p. 139, and Lewis, p. 97.

churches to Christian people; and the contrary teaching and false belief, brought up by cursed hypocrites and hereticks, and by worldly priests uncunning in God's law, held up as false and pernicious." All this would not do; and where he imagined his chief support and influence lay, namely, in the power and friendship of John Duke of Lancaster, here, to his extreme distress, he found himself deceived.* That prince, who, with some great and good qualities, was worldly and ambitious, so long as Wickliff had busied himself in defending the King's royal prerogative against the papal encroachments, was the willing but interested patron of his bold doctrines; but he now came to a question concerning the holiest of the sacraments of the church, purely theological, and in the free discussion of which the energy and eloquence of the reformer, already so often successful, was about to overturn a belief which the benighted minds of the laity had been taught to regard with a mysterious and awful veneration. Here the duke, therefore, made a stand, and, informing Wickliff that he must not look for his support in his

* Lewis, p. 99.

complaint against the chancellor, advised him to give up for the future the discussion of such subjects, and patiently to submit to the judgment of his ordinary. It has been already remarked, that the opinions of Wickliff, as to the bodily presence in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, were, even previous to his having suffered persecution for them, by no means fixed and clear. This subject, upon which, more than a century afterwards, the vigorous mind of Luther, aided as it was by the increased lights which arose from the advanced state of knowledge, could not discern the truth, appeared especially perplexed and intricate to his great precursor; and so much was this the case, that after, in a passage already quoted from his work entitled "*The Dialogue*," he had contended that the body of Christ is only figuratively present in the host, he adds, with great modesty and earnestness, that he was ready to believe a more subtile explanation, if he was convinced of the truth of it by Scripture and reason. Upon being threatened, therefore, with excommunication, and finding himself deserted by the friends who had hitherto protected him, he determined to extricate himself from the dangers which gather-

ed round him, by giving in a cautious and qualified explanation of his doctrines regarding the bodily presence, in which he retracted the most alarming parts of it; and without formally embracing, in its most shocking and gross sense, the idea of transubstantiation, he explained the presence of Christ in this sacrament by various subtile, wire-drawn, and obscure distinctions, which, to a mind of the present day seeking for the truth, with the assistance of plain and sound reason, appear, it must be allowed, most frivolous and unmeaning. Although, however, the reasoning, obscured as it is by monkish Latin and scholastic refinements, is frequently unintelligible, the conclusions to which he comes are generally sufficiently explicit, and entitle us to say that this paper was by no means a formal recantation of his opinions; but amounts, on the whole, to an assertion of the doctrine of consubstantiation, afterwards adopted by Luther. He tells us,* that " This venerable sa-

* The whole Confession, which is a long paper, written in Latin, is printed by Lewis in his Collection of Papers and Records, No. 21. I have in the text considered this confession as Wickliff's, because we do not possess actual proof against it; yet the reader will find, in the Appendix, some circumstances which lead to a presumption that it is not an authentic document.

crament is naturally bread and wine; but is sacramentally the body and blood of Christ." He observes, that there is a threefold modus or manner of the being of the body of Christ in the consecrated host, namely, a virtual, spiritual, and sacramental; and that the third of these is the mode of being by which the body of Christ is singularly in the consecrated host. He affirms, that the mode of being by or in which the body of Christ is in the host is *very*, or true, and *real;* and that Christ is in that sacrament in a more especial manner than in the others. He then goes on, multiplying distinctions, to state, "That, besides these three modes of being, there are three others more true and real, which the body of Christ has appropriated to itself in heaven, namely, the mode of being substantially, corporally, and dimensionally; and that your gross thinkers do not apprehend any other mode of being of a natural substance besides these, and are therefore very unfit to comprehend the secrets of the Eucharist, and the subtilty of the Scripture: that if they believed the virtue or power of the words of Christ, they would know how this bread is miraculously, verily, really, spiritually, virtually, and sacramentally, the body

of Christ, *without its being so corporally and substantially.*" (What is this but the doctrine of consubstantiation?) He goes on to observe, that he had detected the equivocations and fallacies of the adversaries of this doctrine, and had proved that the fathers say some things of the sacrament as bread, and some things of it as believing it not to be identically but sacramentally the body of Christ. And here he introduces the opinions of Ignatius, Cyprian, Ambrose, Austin, Jerome, the decree of Pope Nicholas, and the usage of the church, in support of his decision. He observes, in the words of St Augustine, "If I shall say anything of myself only, I am unwilling that you should tie your faith to it; but if Christ says it, then woe be to the unbeliever." Wherefore, woe must be pronounced on that adulterous generation, who gave more credit to the testimony of Innocent or Raymund, than to the sense of the gospel, as quoted by the above witnesses. The consequence of that insane fiction, invented by the lying priests of Baal, that the Eucharist is an accident without a subject, is, he remarks, no less than a blaspheming of God, and a scandal offered to the saints; and he concludes with these memorable words, "It is

my firm belief that truth will finally overcome them;" expressions uttered, we must remember, when this great man, already sinking under the infirmities of age and disease, and worn out by a life of unwearied labour and persecution, found himself deserted by his friends, and exposed to the rage and malice of his enemies. In such circumstances, these words proceeding from the lips of Wickliff, are memorable and almost prophetic, and show that noble courage in defence of the cause to which he had devoted his life, and that cheerful assurance of its final triumph, which supported him under all his sorrows, which, when his feet were stumbling upon the dark mountains, came to give him light, and assuredly was sent by the Father of Light, whose servant he was.

This explanation, as may be believed, was regarded by Archbishop Courtney, and his party in the church, rather as an aggravation of the offence than a recantation of the error. The prelate had now determined to crush, by every possible means, the new heresies which were springing up in the church. He was aware, however, that owing to the great talents of their author, and the firm hold which

he had got, not only over the common people by his preachers, who went about the country, and were warmly welcomed and listened to, but by his reputation for learning in the University, it would require great deliberation, and a strong arm to accomplish this object. Having consulted with the council of his suffragan bishops, he summoned Wickliff to appear before him on a certain day at Oxford, where, accordingly, the Reformer attended, in presence of a splendid and solemn assembly of the church, consisting of the principal bishops, the chancellor and doctors of the University, with a great concourse of the clergy and the people. Before this convocation, Wickliff complained, that the opinions which he was accused of maintaining were the inventions of others, and had never been promulgated by him; and he delivered a short and clear exposition of his doctrines regarding the Eucharist, in which, without the subtilties and intricate reasonings of his former explanation, he steadily maintained the same conclusions, and reprobated, in almost stronger terms than before, the idea which had originally been promulgated by Radbert, affirming that it was heresy to maintain that

this sacrament was God's body and no bread, seeing it is both together; and still greater heresy to assert, that this sacrament is an accident without a substance.

In the conclusion of this second explanation, which Knighton has the folly to call a recantation of his opinions,* he is very bold, and informs the assembly, that he is well assured the third part of the clergy of England are ready to defend these opinions, were it necessary, at the expense of their lives. It does not appear that after this explanation the council took any immediate or violent step against Wickliff; and this assuredly not from any favour which he had conciliated, but probably because they still found themselves too weak to crush him. His enemies, however, were far from sitting still; they only changed their ground, and their mode of attack, and dismissing for a time the particular dispute regarding the bodily presence, they procured the lords in the upper house of parliament to present a petition to the King, entreating him to provide some remedy against those innu-

* Knighton apud Twysden, vol. II. p. 2649. It will be found printed in the Appendix.

merable errors and wicked opinions, which were maintained by the followers of Wickliff, whom they termed Lollards. Of these errors they drew a short account, which, as throwing light upon the chief opinions of the Wickliffites, is important to be noticed.* It states that these heretics maintained,

I. That the present Pope, Urban the Sixth, is not the successor of St Peter on earth, but is the son of Anti-christ, and that there has not been a true Pope since the time of St Silvester.

II. That the Pope cannot grant indulgences, nor any bishops; and that all who place any confidence in such indulgences are cursed.

III. That the Pope cannot make canons decretal, or constitutions; and that no one is obliged to observe them.

IV. That every sin is blotted out by the contrition of the heart alone, without any oral confession to a priest; and that such confession is nowise requisite, even where there is plenty of priests.

* Lewis, p. 104.

V That images of the crucifix, of the blessed virgin, and of other saints, are by no means to be worshipped; nay, that they sin and commit idolatry who do even worship their pictures, and that God does not do any miracles by them; and that all who go on pilgrimage to them, or do any way adore them, exhibiting lights or other devotions before them, are accursed.

VI. That the Holy Trinity is in no wise to be figured, formed, nor painted, in the form in which it is painted throughout the whole church.

VII. That the excommunication of a Pope or bishop does not hold nor bind where God does not bind.

VIII. That we are not to supplicate the saints to pray for the living.

IX. That no rector, or vicar, or any prelate, is excused from making their personal residence on their benefices, by continuing in the service of bishops, archbishops, or Pope.

X. That it is not lawful in a presbyter to hire out his work.

XI. That priests and deacons, whosoever they are, are obliged, and ought to preach pub-

licly to the people, on account of the orders they have taken, although they have not a people and a cure of souls.

XII. That rectors and vicars who do not celebrate nor minister the sacraments of the church, are to be removed, and others to be instituted in their room, because they are unworthy, and wasters of the church's goods.

XIII. That ecclesiastical men ought not to ride on such great horses, nor use such large jewels, precious garments, or delicate entertainments, but to renounce them all, and give them to the poor, walking on foot, and taking staves in their hands, to take on them the appearance of poor men, giving others examples by their conversation.

These opinions, demonstrating by the best of all evidence, the testimony of an enemy, the soundness, purity, and truly evangelical spirit of the doctrines of the followers of Wickliff, were stigmatized by the bishops, abbots, and priors, with the lords of the upper house, as pernicious both to the church and state, and liable to bring the kingdom into great danger. Upon this the King, or rather

the clergy, speaking by his mouth, exhorted the Primate of England, and the bishops of his realm, to a more rigid and severe exercise of their spiritual functions, as the guardians of the church, and the out-rooters of heresy; and enjoined them diligently to examine into the state of their dioceses, to peruse their English books, by which we must understand the treatises of Wickliff; and to labour to bring back the wandering sheep to the fold of the true church, and re-establish the people once more in the unity of the orthodox faith. In order to the accomplishment of this, he, by his letters patent, which were directed to all the counties of the kingdom, appointed in each county certain inquisitors, whose business it was to search for these heretical books already mentioned; to lay hands on those who wrote or who favoured their dispersion, and to commit them as rebels to the next gaol, till further orders from the King.*

These severe and cruel injunctions were published under the pretended authority of an act of parliament, but such was the popularity of

* Lewis, p. 106.

Wickliff's opinions amongst the Commons, that they positively refused their assent to the passing of any such law; and probably owing to this, the execution of such harsh measures was very slowly and imperfectly proceeded in.

Hitherto Courtney, the Archbishop of Canterbury, had considered himself only as archbishop-elect; for being a thorough bigot, he dared not deem himself a true prelate till he had received the consecrated pall from Rome, and we may ascribe the moderation of his measures against Wickliff to this strange delusion. The splendid and holy mantle was soon after delivered to him at Croydon, and the moment it had touched his shoulders, the poor creature imagined himself a new man, and springing on his feet, began to bestir himself violently against the new opinions, and their now aged supporter. He called together a court of bishops, doctors, and bachelors of divinity, with those of the civil and canon laws, which he appointed to meet in the monastery of the Preaching Friars at London.* This they accordingly did, and were about to

* Archbishop Wake's State of the Church, p. 313.

proceed to business, when the house was shaken by a great earthquake, which so alarmed them, that many members, with pale looks and trembling voices, entreated for an adjournment, and were about to leave the convocation, when the archbishop, with considerable ingenuity and presence of mind, observed, "That the earthquake portended a purging of the kingdom from heresies, inasmuch as there are included in the bowels of the earth, air and noxious spirits, and they are expelled in an earthquake; and so the earth is cleansed, but not without great violence; so, in the hearts of reprobate men, were many heresies shut up, but, by the condemnation of them, the kingdom has been cleared, but not without irksomeness and great commotion."

By means of this seasonable oration, the archbishop induced his terrified suffragans and trembling bachelors to keep their seats; and they then proceeded, as usual, to draw up and condemn certain heretical conclusions, which were more numerous than those already enumerated, but very similar to them in import.* They then solemnly excommunicated all per-

* Knighton de Event. Angl. apud Twysden, p. 2650.

sons who, in time coming, should dare to maintain and promulgate them; and, to conclude all, with the gravest and most striking ceremony which the church could present, the whole of the clergy, and the principal persons of the laity, marched barefooted through the city of London in a solemn procession, emblematic of their repentance for the foul heresies which they had suffered to grow up, and of their resolution to extirpate them for ever from the fair field of the English Church. This imposing piece of prelatical mummery was concluded by a sermon preached by the provincial of the Carmelites, John Kyningham, the confessor of John of Gaunt, and who had employed his pen in a reply to the heresies of Wickliff.* After this, Courtney directed a letter to the Bishop of London, in which he commanded him, "with all speedy diligence, to enjoin all and singular his brethren and suffragans of the body and church of Canterbury, that every one of them, in their churches, and other places of their city and diocese, do warn and admonish, that no man, from henceforth, of what estate or condition soever, do hold,

* Knighton, p. 2651. Tanner sub voce Cuningham.

preach, or defend the foresaid heresies and errors, or any of them; nor that he admit to preach any one that is prohibited, or not sent to preach; nor that he hear nor hearken to the heresies or errors of him, or of any of them, or that he favour or lean unto him, under pain of the greater excommunication, which he commands to be thundered against all and every one who shall be disobedient in this behalf."*

Wickliff's rectory of Lutterworth was situated in the bishopric of Lincoln, and archdeaconry of Leicester; and the archbishop took care that a copy of this letter should be sent to the Bishop of Lincoln, who, in his turn, transmitted it to the abbots and priors within the archdeaconry of Leicester, and to the deans, rectors, perpetual vicars, and parochial chaplains, throughout the same, commanding them to see the archbishop's letters carried duly into execution. Having thus, as he hoped, effectually checked the progress of these heresies in the quarter which held the rectory of the arch-heretic himself, Courtney

* Lewis, p. 109.

next endeavoured to stay the growth of the same poisonous innovations, as he deemed them, in a quarter where they had gained much strength—the University of Oxford. For this purpose, he directed a letter to Friar Peter Stokys, professor of divinity, of the order of Carmelites, much in the same terms in which he had addressed the Bishop of London; informing him of the great assembly which had been held at the Preaching Friars, and transmitting to him a copy of the heretical conclusions there condemned, with the injunction, that he should take care that "no one should, for the future, hold, preach, or defend such heresies and errors in the University of Oxford, in the schools, or out of them, either publickly or privately, or should hearken unto, favour, or adhere to any one who preaches them, but should fly from them, as from a serpent sending forth pestilential poison, and avoid them on pain of the greater excommunication."*

Wickliff was commanded to appear before

* Lewis's Collection of Papers and Records, at the end of his Life of Wickliff, No. 31, and in MS. in Bibl. Cott. Cleop. E. II. fol. 155.

this court, assembled at the Preaching Friars, but he claimed, as a member of the University, to be exempted from all Episcopal jurisdiction, and on this ground refused to obey the summons. He knew, also, the malice and cunning of his enemies, and had received private intimation that the prelates had laid a plot for seizing his person on the road to the court.*

Disappointed of getting the person of Wickliff into his power, the indefatigable archbishop again applied to Parliament, and had influence to get the Lords to pass a bill against the preachers of heresy, "Directing all sheriffs and other officers, according to certificates given them by the prelates, to arrest all such, and keep them in strong prison, till they justify themselves according to the law and reason of Holy Church." But here the spirit of the Commons of England again rose in strong opposition against this unwarrantable order. They refused their assent to the bill; and, in

* Mr Wharton, in his valuable Append. to Cave's Hist. Liter. p. 51, says Wickliff would not appear, because he had received intimation of a plot to seize him laid by the prelates.

the next Parliament, insisted on its being revoked; declaring, that it never was their intention, nor had it been the custom of their ancestors before them, to bind themselves and their successors to the will of the prelates, (or to be obliged to justify themselves for any opinions which they might entertain.)*

The archbishop, again defeated in this quarter, went to the King, whom he found it easier to work upon, and obtained from this weak monarch his royal letters, by which he gave power to the prelate and his suffragans to imprison, at their discretion, all who adhered to the heretical conclusions published in the assembly at the Preaching Friars, wherever such persons could be found; and appointed the chancellor and the proctors of the University of Oxford inquisitors-general, to search for all heretics within their jurisdiction; and enjoined them, that if they found any person so bold as to receive into their houses or inns, Master John Wickliff, Master Nicolas Hereford, Master Philip Reppington, and Master John Ashton, or who presumed to communi-

* Cotton's Abridgement, p. 285.

cate with any of them, they should banish and expel them from the University and town of Oxford within seven days after the discovery; and that if any one was found having in his possession any book or treatise compiled by the same John Wickliff, they should cause it to be seized and taken."*

These strong measures had not exactly the effect in the University of Oxford which the archbishop had contemplated. The chancellor, so far from seconding the persecuting spirit of the prelate, showed to one of the ablest and most avowed of Wickliff's followers, Dr Nicholas Hereford, a very special predilection, and appointed him to preach in his room, before the University, the sermon of the year—in these times an honourable distinction. This highly incensed Courtney; nor was his choler diminished, when, in reply to his strict injunctions to the chancellor, commanding him to inquire in all halls and inns of the University after the persons who maintained the heretical conclusions so often alluded to, and to compel them to retract upon oath, this dignitary in-

* Lewis, p. 114.

formed him, that " to do this was as much as his life was worth." The archbishop, in a rage, called in the civil power; and the chancellor of the University being cited before the council of state, the Lord High Chancellor commanded him to return to the University, to obey the orders of the primate, and publish his mandate, with the heretical conclusions, in the Church of St Mary's, which, however unwilling, he was at length compelled to do.

Courtney now feeling his own strength, and confident of the support of the King and the Lord Chancellor, was determined to give the last blow to Wickliff and his followers, by which he no doubt hoped, not only to banish them from the University, but to crush their doctrines for ever. The first part of his scheme he succeeded in—the last, by the providence of God, it was out of his power to accomplish. He accordingly directed to the chancellor of the University a second letter, in which he admonished him to suffer none hereafter to teach, maintain, preach, or defend, any such heresies or errors in the University, either within or without the schools; *and in particular, not to admit John Wickliff, or any of*

*his followers, to the office of preaching, but to denounce the same to be suspended.** By this denunciation he had reduced Wickliff to a mere cipher, in a University in which he had long been held in the highest estimation, and which was in truth rendered principally illustrious by his genius; but he still had severer mortification in store for him. Wickliff's own mind he knew was of that noble and independent stamp, that having been once fixed in what he believed the truth, no human power would induce him to change; but with his chief followers in the University, Ashton,† Repingdon,‡ and Hereford, he believed the case to be different; and having summoned a

* Archbishop Wake's State of the Church, Append. p. 78.

† Ashton was master of arts in Merton College, p. 54. He wrote a work in Latin, "Against the Usurpations of the Clergy." Another work "On the Right Use of the Sacrament." His Recantation is preserved in the Bodleian MS. Arch. B. 83. It is in English. Tanner, Biblioth. p. 54.

‡ Repingdon will be found commemorated in Leland de Script. Britt. and in Anton. Wood, Hist. Oxford. He was a canon of Leicester, and a favourite of Henry the Fourth. See Tanner, Biblioth. p. 622. After his recantation he became Bishop of Lincoln. His recantation, with that of Dr Nicholas Hereford, will be found in vol. III. Concilia M. Britt. et Hibern, p. 161.

convocation of his clergy at the Monastery of St Frydeswide, on the 18th of November, he had the delinquents brought before him. The terrors of Ecclesiastical censure, and the loss of worldly preferment, were too much for them, and all of them forsook their master. Repingdon and Hereford made a formal recantation of their errors in the Convent of the Minorites, on the 19th of June 1582. Ashton at first gave signs of a better spirit, and refusing to abjure his errors, was imprisoned by Courtney. This severity entirely overcame his resolution; and having, like his weak-hearted brethren, transmitted his recantation to the archbishop, he was restored to his scholastic honours, and re-admitted into favour.

Yet this persecution, although it caused some of his most eminent followers to fall away from him, rather increased his disciples amongst the common people; so that the sorrow which he felt at the desertion of his most celebrated followers, was compensated by the comfort he experienced in welcoming multitudes of the lower classes,* who, if they came

* Lewis's Life, p. 118.

not with the excellency and power of learning, brought with them that singleness and simplicity of heart which far outweighs all the pride of philosophy. He rejoiced, therefore, to see, that on that highway of the truth, which his hands had cleared, although it was deserted by the rich and the powerful, the way-faring men, though fools, were walking;* and he remembered, that in the accomplishment of the counsels of God, the weak things of the earth were destined to confound the strong.

Wickliff, however, was compelled to leave the University—to desert the pleasant places where his youth had been spent and his honours won—where truth had first shown to him her divine countenance, and in the tranquillity and seclusion of which, he had hoped, after persecution had ceased, and "in a quiet time when there was no chiding," to spend the evening of his pilgrimage. But all this the malice of his enemies denied him. He was deprived of the liberty of preaching; he was cut off from the means of doing good, either by his lectures on divinity, his addresses in the pul-

*Isaiah.

pit, or his written compositions. All were proscribed; and overcome with years and infirmity, he left Oxford for ever, and retired to his parsonage of Lutterworth.

This great man was now rapidly approaching the termination of all his mortal labours. He had already, before leaving Oxford, been attacked by a severe shock of the palsy; and although he partially recovered, it left him with enfeebled limbs, and a shattered constitution. His constant exertion, in disseminating his peculiar doctrines, his lectures, and sermons, his habits of severe private study, which are evinced by the almost incredible number of his written works, the perpetual persecution to which he was exposed, and this last severe stroke, the desertion of his most powerful friends and favourite disciples, wore out a frame not naturally strong; but the mind which enlightened this decaying case of humanity was yet vigorous as ever. It burned brightly, though the damps of death were gathering round it; and Courtney, the archbishop, although he had succeeded in banishing him from Oxford, found that the voice of truth was as powerful, when heard in the pul-

pit at Lutterworth, as when it sounded in the silence of the schools, or in the groves of the academy. At this time the schism between the rival Popes, Urban the Sixth and Clement the Seventh, had come to so violent and rancorous a head, that the fiercest acts of aggression were resorted to; and Urban, whose title was recognized in England, but resisted in France, after thundering out all kinds of curses against his opponent, determined to appeal to the sword; and for this purpose sent his bulls to the Bishop of Norwich, empowering and commanding him to preach a crusade against the French, to collect money for the sacred war, and to reward those who engaged in it with the same indulgences which had been given to the soldiers of the Cross, who fought for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. Strange to tell, such was either the animosity of the English against their old enemies of France, or so high was their devotion to their spiritual father, that this requisition of Urban was enthusiastically received by many of our countrymen; and the chambers of the Pope's collectors were beset, not only by the powerful barons and adventurous knights, but by troops

of fair ladies and rich and noble matrons, who, to obtain absolution, impoverished themselves even to the giving their richest apparel, and stript their delicate persons of their jewels, necklaces, and rings, and their tables of their services of plate,* to furnish soldiers for the discomfiture of Clement. The result of all this was, that the Bishop of Norwich, who had been appointed general, exchanged his cassock for a steel coat, and led over to Calais an army of 50,000 foot and 2000 gallant horse; but, after performing nothing, he returned soon after to disgrace and imprisonment in England.

This unheard-of abuse roused the indignation of Wickliff, and caused him to write a treatise, exposing the sinfulness, cruelty, and unholy passions that were manifested in the preaching of this crusade, and the horrid and blasphemous attempt, which turned the banner of the Cross of Christ, the emblem of

* Knighton apud Twysden, p. 2671, vol. II. "Collegerat enim (Episcopus) innumerabilem et incredibilem summam pecuniæ auri, et argenti, atque jocalium, monilium, annulorum, discorum, peciarum, cocliarium, et aliorum ornamentorum, et præcipue de dominabus et aliis mulieribus."

peace, mercy, and charity, into a flag of war and murder, which, for the love of two false priests, who deserved no other name than Antichrist, persuaded Christian men to slay each other, and, for the maintenance of their own worldly estate, brought desolation and oppression upon Christendom." Exposing also the blasphemous trade of indulgences, as a premium held out to those who were most forward in bringing tumult, and confusion, and blood, into the dwellings of men, he cries out, "Why will not the proud priest of Rome grant full pardon to all men for to live in peace, charity, and patience, as he does to all men to fight and slay each other?"* This appears to have been the last work which he wrote.

On his retiring to Lutterworth, he for near-

* Great Sentence of the Curse Expounded, MS. c. 16. Wickliff's observations on this schism of the Papacy seem to have been divided into two works; one written in Latin, and afterwards translated by him into English. It is entitled, "*De Papa Romana.*" But in his English translation, which is preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, it calls itself, "*De Schisma Papæ.*" The other treatise is entitled, "*De Pontificum Romanorum Schismate.*" It is included by Bishop Bale in his catalogue of the Reformer's works, but where it now exists is unknown.

ly two years so far recovered his health, as to pursue his favourite studies, and to preach to his little flock—a duty which was poorly attended to in these godless days, but which, in every part of his writings, he strongly and warmly inculcates. In these labours, however, his infirmities required the assistance of a parochial chaplain, John Purney,* who filled also the situation of his amanuensis; and, even with this help, it was evident that the mortal disease was gathering strength, and that the period of his sufferings was only removed a little way farther off. At this moment, Pope Urban, incensed no doubt by the last severe exposition of his scheme for a crusade against the French, thundered out a summons to him to appear with all speed, and answer for his heresies, before the court of Rome. To this citation, a vain and weak effort to arrest a dying man, who was setting his house in order, and preparing to leave it with faith and joy, Wickliff returned this answer, which, as the last legacy of this great man to the world and to the church, I shall give at full length.

* Lewis, p. 122.

"I have joyfully to tell all true men the belief that I hold, and especially to the Pope; for I suppose, that if any faith be rightful and given of God, the Pope will gladly preserve it, and, if my faith be error, the Pope will wisely amend it. I affirm, in addition to this, that the gospel of Christ is part of the body of God's law; for I believe that Jesus Christ, that gave in his own person this gospel, is very God and very man; and that, for this reason, it surpasses other laws. I affirm, moreover, that the Pope is most obliged to the keeping of the gospel among all men that live here; for the Pope is highest vicar that Christ has here on earth: and this is true, because the greatness of Christ's vicars is not measured by worldly greatness, but by this—that this vicar follows Christ more than others in virtuous living, for this am I taught by the gospel. This, then, as the sentence of Christ and the gospel, I take as my belief. That Christ for the time he walked here was the poorest of all men, both in spirit and in possessions, for he says he had no where to rest his head on. And moreover, I hold it as my belief, that no man should follow the Pope,

nor any saint that now is in heaven, except inasmuch as they followed Christ, for James and John erred, and Peter and Paul sinned: Moreover, I take it for a wholesome counsel, that the Pope should leave his worldly lordship to worldly lords, as Christ advised him, and move speedily all his clerks to do the like; for thus did Christ, and thus taught his disciples, till the fiend had blinded this world; and if I err in this sentence, I will meekly be amended were it even by death, provided my cure were perfect and skilful—for this would be for my good.

"And if I might travel in my own person, I would, with God's will, go to the Pope; but Christ will needs have me go in a contrary direction, and he has taught me that obedience is due rather to God than man. And I suppose that our Pope will not take the part of Antichrist, and oppose Christ in this, working against his holy will; for if he by himself, or by any of his servants, repeat this summons, against all reason, and go on unskilfully to pursue this citation, then is he open Antichrist. And as merciful intentions did not excuse Peter from being by Christ called Sathan,

neither, by a far stronger consequence, will blind intent and wicked counsel excuse the Pope in this matter; so that if he ask of true priests that they should travel, more than they may by reason of infirmity, there can be no reason given why we should not esteem him Antichrist; for our belief teaches us, that our blessed God suffers us not to be tempted more than we may. How should a man ask such service? And therefore pray we to God for our Pope, Urban the Sixth, that his holy intentions be not quenched by his enemies. And Christ that cannot lie says, that the enemies of a man be especially those of his own household; which saying holds true both of men and fiends."*

With this letter of admonition and apology, in which, although written in a quieter tone than his other works, there are still some outbreakings of his characteristic fire and wrath, Urban was compelled to be content, for he must have known by his emissaries in England, that the heretic was sinking under a mortal disease. To the last, however, he ap-

* Preserved in MS. in the Bod. Library, and printed by Lewis. Collection of Papers and Records, p. 333, No. 23.

peared in his church at Lutterworth, when not as a priest, at least as a hearer, of the word of truth. On the 28th of December 1384, he attended divine service as usual, and spoke on entering the church; but during the performance of mass, and at the time of the elevation of the host, he suddenly fell down under a stroke of the palsy, which deprived him of speech, and carried him off in three days.* Thus died this great and eminently pious man, having been, during his life, almost faithful servant of the truth, in an age where he fell upon "evil tongues and evil days;" and having shown himself an undaunted soldier in the cause of Christ and the gospel, fighting

* "Iste Wickliff fuit paralyticus per duos annos ante mortem suam, et anno Dom. MCCCLXXXIV. obiit in die Sabbati, die S. Silvestri in vigilia circumcisionis Domini. Et in eodem anno, sc. in die S. Innocentium, audiens missam in Ecclesia sua de Lutterworth, circa elevationem sacramenti altaris, decidit percussus magna paralysi, et specialiter in lingua, ita quod nec tunc nec postea loqui potuit usque ad mortem suam. "In introitu autem sui in Ecclesiam suam loquebatur, sed sic percussus est paralysi in eodem die ut loqui non potuerit, nec unquam postea loquebatur." Hæc mihi dixit Dom. Joan. Horn, sacerdos octogenarius, qui fuit sacerdos parochialis de Lutterworth, cum Wickliff, per duos annos usque ad diem mortis Wickliff. * * Hoc ille dixit mihi Doctori Gasgoigne anno D. 1441."—TANNER, *Biblioth.* p. 768.

bravely for them, till life and nature failed him at once, and he fell down on the pavement of his own church; that field on which he had saved many souls, and whereon there are few Christian ministers, who, if wishes could prevail, would not choose to die. He was buried, without any pomp or ceremony, in the chancel of the church, and with no other monument than his unperishable name, which is guarded by Truth, and sanctified and made brighter by Time. In person, Wickliff, from the pictures which remain of him, appears to have been of a good height and commanding presence. His features were high, his eyes deep set and shaded by thick eye-brows; he generally wore a plain dark russet gown, similar to that used by friars, and a doctor's cap on his head. His hair, towards the end of his life, was grey, and his beard, long and venerably white, flowed down upon his breast.

Upon the news that Wickliff no longer lived, his enemies, the Roman Catholic prelates, no doubt fondly hoped that his heresies would languish and expire with the death of the arch-heretic himself. But they soon found that though the body was committed to the

dust, the soul of the great Reformer, preserved in those living monuments of his genius, his books, was as active and influential as ever; and that the affection of his disciples, which increased after his death, gave a new impulse to his opinions which they were little prepared to expect. Indeed, there were few quarters which they had not reached. The University of Oxford was deeply infected with them; the higher nobility, and even the royal family, had imbibed their poison as it was called; great numbers of the lower barons, and the knights and gentry, were his devoted followers, and, as we have seen, his defenders; whilst by the lower orders of the people, for whose instruction he had written so many treatises in their maternal tongue, his doctrines were widely and enthusiastically welcomed. Multitudes of the clergy, also, had the courage to embrace these doctrines, and not only by their travels through the country, and their preaching in different places, but by the schools which they instituted for the education of the youth in the principles of their master, contributed to their wide and rapid dissemination. All these things astonished and alarmed the prelacy of

England, so that the ordinary weapons of attack and persecution were soon as busily employed as before. Convocations of the dignified clergy, speeches and exhortations by bishops and archbishops, condemnations of heretical conclusions, thundering letters to the heads of the University, and infamous libels, accusing him of all kinds of crimes, and loading him with abuse, soon followed each other in rapid succession. And when these were found to have little effect, there next came sentences of deprivation and excommunication, proscriptions by royal letters of all books or treatises which savoured of the new opinions, constitutions, or ecclesiastical enactments, giving an odious inquisitorial power to inquire for heretics, and compelling all persons to give them up to the spiritual arm; and, lastly, an act of the House of Parliament, which held out the terror of the flames and the state, to all who refused to abjure their errors.

These methods of compelling the nation into a renunciation of the principles which a great part of it had adopted, continued to be employed with various results down to the year 1415, when the famous Council of Constance

was held; and so far were the doctrines of Wickliff from being at this time thoroughly eradicated, that they had spread from England into other parts of Europe, and John Huss, who had openly preached them in Bohemia, was, by an atrocious decree of this council, condemned and burnt as a heretic. Fortunately for Wickliff, he was now beyond the reach alike of the ecclesiastical thunder, and of the secular arm. But this noble assembly of divines determined to wreak their vengeance on all that remained of him; and by a decree of the council, the body of the Reformer, which had lain undisturbed below the chancel of his own church for thirty years, was ordered to be dug up, and cast on a dunghill, at a distance from all Christian sepulture; a cruel and most impotent revenge, and marked by the meanness and short-sightedness which invariably accompany persecution. This sentence remained unexecuted for fourteen years; but at last, by a strict order from the Pope, Richard Fleming, the Bishop of Lincoln, came to Lutterworth with his attendants, and there disinterred the body of Wickliff. They then burnt his bones till they were reduced to pow-

der, and that nothing might remain of him, cast his ashes into the adjoining brook called the Swift, which runs hard by.

And now, were I to follow the common practice of biographers and historians, I would proceed to draw the character of this remarkable man; and by a proper and ingenious balancing of great qualities against correspondent weaknesses or faults, with a few rich words and brilliant similies to round the period, I might manage to bring out a very tolerable portrait, with the single fault that few perhaps of the features were to be found in the original. Yet with all due deference to the great names which have sanctioned this usage, I have adopted what appears to me a better method. I have given, mostly in his own words, an account of his opinions and doctrines; of the methods he employed for their dissemination by his preaching and his writings; of his reputation and conduct, both as a theologian, as a general scholar in the learning of the times, as an ambassador and servant of his King, and as an indefatigable minister and servant of his God. I have shown him both in prosperity and adversity, in life

and with health smiling round him, in disease, and hourly expecting death. Having done this, I have done all which becomes an honest and faithful biographer; and out of these materials, I leave it to thee, kind reader, whoever thou art, to draw the character of Wickliff for thyself.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX

No. I.

On some Attacks which have been made upon Wickliff's Opinions and Character.

WICKLIFF'S memory has been most virulently attacked by the Roman Catholic clergy; and slanders of the foulest and falsest kind have been poured upon the Reformer by writers of this persuasion. He is stigmatized by Walsingham (Hist. Angl. p. 312) "as the organ of the devil, the enemy of the church, the confusion of the common people, the idol of heretics, the encourager of schism, sower of hatred, and the maker of lies, who, when he designed, as is reported, to belch out accusations and blasphemies against St Thomas, in the sermon he had prepared for that day, was suddenly struck by the judgment of God, and had all his limbs seized with the palsy; and that mouth which was to have spoken huge things against God and his saints, or holy church, was miserably drawn aside, and afforded a frightful spectacle to beholders." And the same charitable historian, in another passage, observes, "That, in the

year 1385, on the feast of the passion of St Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, the organ of the devil, enemy of the church, sink of flattery, John Wickliff, being struck by the horrible judgment of God, continued to live to St Silvester's Day, on which he breathed out his malicious spirit, which went to the habitations of darkness; and he was justly struck on St Thomas's Day, whom he had very often blasphemed with his venomous tongue."

I shall not so far compromise the acknowledged uprightness and purity of the character of Wickliff, as to condescend to answer such ribaldry as this, merely observing in passing, that, as Wickliff, by the testimony of his own parish priest and assistant, who was living with him at the time of his death, was seized with palsy, not on St Thomas's Day, but on the day before, the kind and charitable theory of Walsingham, that his death was an awful judgment, is somewhat misplaced. But he has been attacked where we should least have expected it, by a famous Protestant writer, whose name is never to be pronounced without honour—the amiable and learned Melancthon; and as I consider this attack just as unfounded as that of Walsingham, it becomes his biographer to clear him from these aspersions, which, because they are more decorous, are, for this reason, more dangerous to his fame. In doing this, I have only to make use of that excellent chapter on the opinions of Wickliff which is given us by the learned Lewis in his Life, where he has replied, at much greater length than it will be requisite for me to do, to the various misconceptions of his meanings and misconstructions of his doctrines, of which, at different times, various authors have been guilty.

In the preface to a Latin work, entitled, "*Sententiæ Veterum de Cœna Domini,*" Melancthon thus writes: "I have looked into Wickliff, who is very confused in this controversy—but I have found in him many other errors, by which a judgment may be made of his spirit. He neither understood nor believed the righteousness of faith. He foolishly confounds the gospel and the science of politics, and does not see that the gospel allows us to make use of the lawful forms of government of all nations. He contends, that it is not lawful for priests to have any property. * * He wrangles sophistically, and downright seditiously, about civil dominion. In the same manner, he cavils sophistically against the received opinion of the Lord's Supper." I wish that Melancthon had here given us, as in all fair controversy ought to be done, the very passages of which he complains, and upon which he founds his opinion. Seeing, however, he has not done so, we must answer him as we best can. And with regard to the first of these heads of attack, namely, that Wickliff misunderstood, or did not believe, the righteousness of faith, I have only to refer my reader to what has been already said of Wickliff's opinions on the subject of justification and merits, and to the quotations from his work, "*De Veritate Scripturæ,*" which have been already given. He will there read, in the Reformer's own words, that "Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for salvation, and that, without that faith, it is impossible for any man to please God." He will find it stated expressly, "That the merit of Christ is able by itself to redeem all mankind from hell, and that this sufficiency is to be understood without any other cause concurring; and that, therefore, men ought

for their salvation to trust wholly to Christ, not to seek to be justified by any other way than by his death and passion; nor to be righteous in any other way than by a participation of his all-perfect righteousness."

Surely if Melancthon has searched diligently the writings of Wickliff, and had found this and many other passages which might be selected equally clear and explicit, he never would have ventured to have asserted, "that he neither understood nor believed the righteousness of faith." But the probable account of this mistake of Melancthon's is to be found in the circumstance, that Wickliff's books were written at different times, and are very numerous, and that we can only discover what his opinions were at the time when his mind was settled and made up upon the great questions of Christian belief, by a due investigation and comparison of them all. His intellect was always growing and getting more enlightened. Surrounded at first by great darkness and doubt, it was ever searching for the truth; yet in some of his earlier works it could not be, and was not, so successful in discovering where the truth lay, as in his later writings, and it has no doubt frequently happened, that his best and latest works which remain in MS., shut up in our national libraries, have never been seen by those who yet pronounce, like Melancthon, upon his opinions, without having the means of judging what these opinions in their most enlightened state really were.* When Melancthon

* Since writing this, I find Dr James makes nearly the same observation, (p. 64 of Wickliff's Conformity.) "For answer to him (Melancthon) I say that either he read some of his works which he made when he was but newly converted, which might peradventure savour of folly or of a bad spirit, or else that he was cozened by some

observes, that Wickliff confounds the gospel and politics, and wrangles seditiously and sophistically about civil dominion, he probably points to the same and equally unfounded objection which has been made against him by Father Parsons, viz. that he maintained, "that so long as a man is in deadly sin, he is neither bishop nor prelate, and that if a bishop should give holy orders, or consecrate the sacrament of the altar when he is in mortal sin, it is not available."

Wickliff's meaning on these points may be gathered from a passage in his work, entitled Trialogus. "In the 8th of Hosea, it is written of unbelieving kings, "They reigned, but not by me; they were princes, and I knew it not;" and it is added, as the reason, "of their silver and gold, they have made themselves idols, that they may be cut off." And Wickliff's comment on this verse is this, "They who do not rule of God, and whom in bearing rule he does not acknowledge, there is no doubt but they want a just dominion;" from which he concludes, "It is plain that no one in mortal sin hath a true dominion over any of the creatures, *apud Deum*, in the sight of God, but deserves to be called a tyrant,

spurious or bastard treatises, which were broached in his name." And Wickliff himself in his Trialogus, lib. i. c. 10, and iii. c. 8, says, "I know very well, that in pretending to treat of the wisdom and power of God, I am plunging into an ocean of difficulties, where I may be apt to prate concerning many things, without having a good foundation for what I say. I know that it is a very hard matter to preserve the due course, especially as on many points I think differently from what I formerly did. However, as I was then ready to own my errors, so I trust I shall always be, whenever I am shown that I have advanced anything contrary to truth."—MILNER'S *Ecclesiast. History*, vol. IV. p. 585. Appendix.

thief, or robber, although, by reason of some human law, he retain the name of a king, a prince, or a lord." And here he probably had in view that sentence of Augustine, quoted by John Huss, the great Bohemian reformer. "Omne quod male possidetur alienum est, male autem possidet qui male utitur. Fideli homini totus mundus divitiarum est; infideli autem nec obolus." And Wickliff, in his work *Ecclesiæ Regimen*, observes, "If temporal lords do wrong, and extortions to the people, they are traitors to God, and his people, and tyrants of Anti-Christ." Now, it cannot be denied, that these opinions are dangerous, because they are liable to easy misconstruction by violent and designing spirits, and so far I will allow, that in such times as those of Richard the Second, when an insurrectionary spirit was abroad in England, and Wat Tyler and his mobs were threatening to overturn all civil government, it was imprudent in a high degree to publish any doctrines which could be taken hold of by the violent and disaffected. But having said this, we must observe, that Wickliff is careful to make the distinction, that his observations go to prove that it is only in the sight and judgment of God, *apud Deum*, that men who are living in mortal sin, lose their authority; for when we look into other passages of his works, we find that the doctrine of subjection and obedience to princes is strongly and clearly inculcated. Thus, in the 11th chapter of the MS. work, the great Sentence of Curse Expounded, which was written in defence of the "Conclusion," that temporal lords may at their pleasure take away temporal goods from churchmen, who are habitual delinquents, he says, "Christ and his apostles were most obedient to kings and lords,

and taught all men to be subject to them, and serve them truly and willingly in bodily works and tribute—and dread them and worship them before all other men. Jesus Christ paid tribute to the emperor, and commanded men to pay him tribute. And St Peter commandeth in God's name Christian men to be subject to every creature of man, either to king, as more high than others, or to dukes, as sent by him to the vengeance of misdoers, and the praising of good men." * * "And St Paul proffered himself ready to suffer death by doom of the emperor's justice, if he were worthy to die, as the Acts of the Apostles teach."

And this is exactly one of the points on which he attacks the clergy of his time, namely, "that in denying this obedience, they are traitors to kings and lords, because they pleaded to be exempt from the king's jurisdiction;" and elsewhere he asserts, that he and his followers opposed, by reasons taken from God's law, all rebellion of servants against lords, and charged servants to "be obedient, although their lords were tyrants." And if the reader desire any more satisfaction on this subject, I refer him to the learned Dr James's book,—"Wickliff's Conformitie with the now Church of England," p. 64.

Again, Wickliff's opinions are grossly misconstrued, when it is said, he taught that prelates in mortal sin are no prelates, and that what they consecrate, ordain, or baptize, is null. For, in his Treatise *De Veritate Scripturæ*, p. 138, he pointedly distinguishes between the effects of mortal sin upon a priest himself when he pronounces the sacramental words, and their efficacy with regard to the recipients or communicant. "Unless a Christian priest," says he, "be united unto Christ by

grace, Christ cannot be his Saviour, neither can he speak the sacramental words without lying, although they are profitable to the worthy receivers, *licet prosint capacibus.*"

With regard to the accusation, that he taught that it was unlawful for priests to have property, it is equally unfounded with the rest. He was no doubt a great enemy to the religious, and wrote against their being suffered to have great manors and lordships,* which they had then accumulated to such an extent, that it was computed they had in their hands little less than one half of the temporalities of the kingdom. He showed, that in the old law all priests and deacons, and officers of the temple were sustained by tithes and offerings, and possessed none other Lordships; but no where does he assert that these tithes, which are the due and proper support of the clergy, ought to be detained by the parishioners, or bestowed at their will and pleasure;† on the contrary, in his work *De Veritate Scripturæ*, he observes, "Decimæ prædiales non debent subtrahi, cum ad Ecclesiam pertinent." In illustration of this, I may quote an assage of the learned Dr James, the author of Wickliff's Conformity with the now Church of England. "But," says he, in discussing this subject of tithes, "shall we pay

* Wickliff had probably borrowed these opinions against the inexpediency of the clergy amassing great temporal wealth, from an author whom he studied much, William Occham, one of the greatest doctors amongst the schoolmen, who, in 1305, wrote a work, in which he contends that the clergy should have every necessary of life, but no temporal kingdom or lordship.—TURNER'S *History of England*, vol. III. p. 106.

† James's Conformitie of Wickliff with the Church of England, p. 53.

them unto one that we know to be a lewd companion, a very varlet, an open drunkard, * * or a murderer of men's soules."—Yes, verily, in Wickliff's judgment, "unless the fact be very notorious, indeed, such as the people know, *per judicium operationis*, by their lives and manners. * * Yet they may not in any sort take away the tithes quite and clear from the church, but sequestrate them as it were for the next incumbent; and he then proceeds to show the legal mode in which this sequestration ought to be made. * * It is true, that Wickliff, in all his books, doth everywhere commend a kind of evangelical poverty, persuading clergymen to renounce the vain pomp and glory of the world, and to lead, if it were possible, an apostolical or evangelical life, to be content with food and raiment; yet he approved well enough of using the things of this world, and he himself enjoyed tithes, went well apparelled, and kept a good table of that which was his own."*

The last point upon which he has been censured by Melancthon, is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; upon which I have spoken so fully in the body of this life, and have given so many extracts from his writings, that I may leave it to the judicious reader to extract from these passages his defence; only observing, that he should be careful, in justice to Wickliff, to distinguish his last opinions upon this subject from his first crude reasonings, in which, as already noticed, there is much over-refined, mystical, and unintelligible speculation.

* James's Wickliff's Conformitie, p. 54, 55, 56.

LIST OF WICKLIFF'S WORKS.

1. Trialogorum suorum, Libri 4. Printed in Germany, A.D. 1525; and so rare that there are only four copies in England.

2. De Diabolo et Membris. Lib. 2. Biblioth. Bod. Arch A. No. 3849, p. 58, c. 20; and in C.C.C. in Cambridge. Translated into English.

3. De Christo et Anti-Christo. Lib. 2. MS. in Trinity College Library, Cambridge. At the end of a volume of Homilies on the Gospels.

4. Sermones in Epistolas. Lib. 4. MS. in Public Library, Cambridge, and in the King's Library at Essex-House. In Eng.

5. Sermones in Evangelia. Lib. 3. MS. in the same volume as the Sermons on the Epistles. In Eng.

6. In Evangelia Festivalia. MS. in C.C.C. Library, Cambridge, and also in the King's Library. The same Collection contains another work—In Evangelia Terialia. It is also contained in the Collection in the King's Library. Both in Eng.

7. In Evangelia Dominicalia. Lib. 2. Or Homilies on the Sunday Gospels through the year. MS. in the Public Library at Cambridge. In Eng.

*8. In Commune Sanctorum. Lib. 1. MS. in C.C.C. Cambridge. In Eng. There is a MS. of this in the King's Library; at the end of which, is an imperfect tract, entitled, Pardon.

9. De Dominis et Servis. Lib. 2. The same in Eng. in C.C.C. Cambridge.

10. Confessio de Eucharistia. Bod. Lib. MS.

11. De esse Ideali Quorumlibet. Lib. 1. This, with 13 other Latin tracts, is in a MS. volume in the Library of Trin. Coll. Cambridge.

12. Octo Beatitudines. Lib. 1. In Eng. in the Cotton Library.

*13. Bible. Translated into English. MS. in the Libraries of the British Museum, Lambeth Palace, Sion College, the Universities of the United Kingdom of their Colleges, and in the Libraries of some Cathedrals.

14. Translatio Clementis Lanthoniensis. A Translation into English of Clement Lanthon's Harmony of the Gospels. MS. in the Library of the Earl of Oxford.

15. An Exposition of the First Eighty-nine Psalms. In Eng. MS. in Lambeth Palace, and in the Bod. Lib. with 12 English Tracts on the Canticles of Holy Scripture.

16. De veritate Scripturæ. Lib. 1. MS. in Bod. Library.

17. De Stipendiis Ministrorum. Lib. 1. In Eng. Also C.C.C. Camb.

18. De Ecclesiæ Dominio. Lib. 1. In Eng. Also in the King's Library. Entitled also, De Ecclesia Catholica.

19. De Dominio Divino. Also in Eng. in Lib. Trin. Col. Dublin.

20. Ad Quæsita Regis et Consilii. Lib. I. In Bod. Lib.

21. Responsiones ad Objecta. In Walsing. Hist. p. 206, 207.

22. De Papa Romana. Lib. 1. In Eng. in Lib. of Trin. Col. Dub..

23. De Nequitiis ejusdem. In Eng. Also in C. C. C. Camb.

24. In Regulum Minoritarum. Also in Eng. in C. C. C. Camb. In same collection is the Testament of St Francis. In English.

25. De Fratrum Nequitiis. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

26. Speculum de Anti-Christo. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

27. De Conversatione Ecclesiasticorum. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb..

28. De Episcoporum Erroribus. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

29. De Clericorum Ordinatione. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

30. De Hypocritarum Imposturis. In Eng. In Trin. Col. Dub.

31. De Blasphemia contra Fratres. In Bod. Lib. Ox. In Eng.

32. Super Oratione Dominica. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

33. De Precationibus Sacris. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

34. Speculum Peccatoris. In Eng. In King's Lib.

35. In Apocalypsin Joannis. In Eng. In the King's Lib.

36. De Obedientia Prælatorum. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

37. De Clericis Possessionariis. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

38. Impedimenta Evangelizantium. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

39. Ad Regem et Parliamentum. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

40. Pro amplexando Evangelio. In Eng. In C. C. C. Camb.

41. Pro Egentibus Presbyteris. In Eng. in C. C. C. Camb.

In this same invaluable Collection of Wickliff's English Works are included these English Tracts.

1. A Short of Life for eche Man in General.

2. The Ave-Maria, with a Short Exposition.

3. How Sathanas and his Children turn Works of Mercy upon Sodom, and Deceyven Men therein.

4. How Sathanas and his Priests, casten by three Cursed Heresies to destroy all Good Living.

6. For Three Skills Lords should Constrain Clerks to live in Meekness.

6. Of Wedded Men and Wives, and of their children also.

7. Of good Preaching Priests.

8. Augustine.

9. The great sentence of the Curse Expounded, in 29 Capita divis.

42. Ostiolum Wiclevi. Printed at Nuremberg, 1546.

43. De Vita Sacerdotum. In Eng. in Bod. Lib.

44. Confessio derelicti pauperis. In Eng. in Lambeth Library.

45. Treatise Compilit of a poor Caitiff.

The above tract is the first in two volumes of Wickliff's tracts, preserved in the public library at Cambridge, No. 467, which are all comprehended under the title of the Poor Caitiff. They are in number twenty-one little treatises—On Belief, on the Ten Commandments, on the Pater Noster, on the Mirror of Sinners, on the Three Arrows to be shot against the Damned on Doomsday,* on Coming to Christ, on Patience, on Temptation, on the Charter of Pardon, on the Soul and the Flesh, on the Name of Jesus, on Meekness, on Wilfulness and Vaine Glory, on Active and Contemplative Life, on the Mirror of Chastity, on four Errors, on the Mirror of Sinners,† and on the Mirror of Matrimony.

46. Speculum secularium Dominorum. MS. in the King's Library.

47. De ultima ætate Ecclesiæ. MS. in Trin. Col. Dublin, in English.

48. De Sathanæ astu, contrà fidem. MS. in Trin. Col. Dublin, in English.

49. Ad Ducem Glocestriæ, contra fraterculum. MS. in Trin. Col. Dublin. In English.

50. Compendium X. Præceptorum. Bod. Lib.

*, Not written by Wickliff, but by Friar Hampole.—BABER's *Life*, p. 51.

† Not a work of Wickliff's, but of Friar Hampole's.—BABER's *Life*, p. 51.

51. De Incarnatione Verbi. MS. in King's Library.

52. Quæstiones XXIV. MS. in Lambeth Library.

53. Determinationes, Mag. Joann. Wycliff contra Carmelitam Kylingham. MS. in C. C. C. Camb.

54. Five bodily Wittis. MS. in Trin. Col. Camb.

55. Seven Werkes of bodily mercy. MS. in Public Library, Camb.; and seven Deedis of ghostly mercy.

56. Seven Deadly Sinnes. MS. in Bod. Lib.

57. Of Pride. MS. in Cotton Library. Also in the same collection, we have, A Prolog of the Commandments; the Twelve tellings of Prayer; the Ten Hests; the Cardinal Virtues; and the Three Graces.

58. De Actubus animæ. MS. in C. C. C. Camb.

59. Nine Virtues apparing to a Devout Man. MS. in King's Library. Also an Exposition on the Decalogue.

60. Epistola Wyclifi, sub ignoto nomine. MS. John Selden; and Determinatio de Dominio.

61. A Treatise of three things destroyen this World. MS. Ric. Jamesii, and in Bod. Lib.

62. In the library of Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge, is a MS. collection of Tracts, in quarto; containing sermons and homilies, in English, said to be Dr Wickliff's. They are enumerated by Dr Lewis, p. 216.

63. De ente Universali et Attributis Divinis. MS. in Trin. Col. Dublin.

64. De Universalibus. MS. Cathed. Eccles. Lincoln.

65. De Minoribus Fratribus se Extollentibus; or, under another title, De Perfectione Statuum. In the Biblioth. Palat. Vind.

66. De Sectis Monachorum, De Quatuor Sectis No-

vellis, De Fundatione Sectarum, De Origine Sectarum; all in the Imperial Library at Vienna.

67. De Solutione Sathanæ. Bib. Vind. Pal.

68. De Dæmonio Meridiano. Bib. Pal. Vind.

69. Responsiones ad XIV. Argumenta Radulphi Strodæ. Also, Litera parva ad quendam socium. MS Bib. Pal. Vind.

70. Speculum Militantis Ecclesiæ. Bib. Pal. Vind. Also in the same library, De Oratione et Ecclesiæ Purgatione.

71. De Gradibus Cleri. Bib. Pal. Vind. And De Graduationibus.

72. De Duobus Generibus Hæreticorum. Bib. Pal. Vind. Also in same library, De Quatuor Interpretationibus, and Super Impositis Articulis.

73. De Citationibus frivolis et aliis versaliis Antichristi. MS. Bib. Pal. Vin.

74. De juramento Arnoldi Collectoni Papæ. MS. in Bib. Pal. Vind. Also in the same library, De Sex Jugis, and "De Exhortatione novi Doctoris."

75. De Ordine Christiano. MS. Bib. Pal. Vind. And in the same library, "De Vaticinatione." Bib. Pal. Vind.

76. Dialogus inter Veritatem et Mendacium. MS. Bib. Pal. Vind.

77. Summa Theologica. This title appears in an ancient MS. catalogue of Wickliff's Writings preserved in the imperial library at Vienna.

78. Epistola de Peccato in Spiritum Sanctum. Bib. Pal. Vind. Also, Epist. ad Archiepiscopum Cantuar. in same library.

79. De Eucharistia et Pœnitentia. MS. Bib. Pal. Vind.

80. De Octo Quæstionibus propositis Discipulo. Bib. Pal. Vind.

81. De Triplici Vinculo Amoris. Bib. Pal. Vind.

82. De Dotatione Ecclesiæ. MS. Bib. Pal. Vind.

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